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Representations of Fear

Verbalising Emotion in Ancient Roman Folk Narrative

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Academia Scientiarum Fennica

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Introduction and Background

1 Introduction

Human existence was precarious in many ways in antiquity: success could swiftly turn into misfortune, health into illness and death, with disastrous consequences for the most important social network in this era, the family. These misfortunes could be difficult to cope with, and adversity, calamity and death therefore had to be made intelligible emotionally. By verbalising fear – in the form of stories of demons, witches, ghosts and wild animals – it could be endowed with a concrete shape.

The argument of the book proceeds from the assumption that the act of narrating stories helps us to make sense of our lives and the world we live in; in narrative, we articulate our emotions, thoughts and opinions, voice our hopes and desires, our anxieties and fears. We achieve this by arranging the disparate events of experience into a meaningful whole, i.e. by organising them into a plot according to well-established cultural patterns. Here we propose to study this process, the verbalisation of emotion in ancient Roman narrative, and its potential therapeutic effects. We have chosen to focus on narratives centering on what we believe to be some of the basic fears of Roman culture: threats against the survival of the family on the one hand, and the hidden dangers of the urban environment on the other.

The material selected for analysis consists of stories derived from a variety of authors, most of them flourishing under the Roman Empire. They are incorporated into diverse literary genres, from novels to works of natural history. In this respect, they belong to a literary context, embodying a literary vision and design. Nevertheless, these stories can be viewed as originally folkloric ones, as they have either been identified as such in prior scholarship, can plausibly be so characterised following a comparison with oral narratives from later periods, or through some other means.

The stories singled out for in-depth study, a limited number of key texts, have been chosen, firstly, on the basis of their oral origin, and secondly, for their focus on fear. These fears emanated from various threats – threats to human existence, both in this life and the hereafter – and were embodied by supranormal beings on the one hand, and natural creatures on the other. All of these stories have affinities with the traditional legend of later periods, or the modern urban legend, which have been regarded as vehicles for the expression and transmission of folk beliefs and popular anxieties. Some of them have never been analysed as items of ancient folklore, adding to our

existing knowledge of the culture of the non-elite. We have adopted a three-fold approach to the narratives selected for examination:

a. a close reading of the texts in terms of Roman social history;
b. an analysis of the emotions verbalised in the texts and elicited in the audience;
c. a discussion of the stories as therapeutic tools.

Since the stories themselves do not offer sufficient information on which to build an in-depth analysis of emotions, we use the sustained accounts in ancient philosophy as an interpretative backdrop against which the stories are read. Although philosophy represents elite perspectives in many respects, the extent to which these accounts developed in dialogue with popular understandings is often understated.

1.1 Methods and Theory

The basic method used in this book is that of close reading, i.e., careful, repeated reading of texts in order to gradually unravel their meanings.[1] These meanings were arguably shared in Roman culture, though not necessarily by all, and they were in a sense familiar to people, on an implicit level if not properly articulated.[2] The aim of our close readings is to tease out these meanings, and employ them in constructing an analytical model for the verbalisation and therapy of Roman fears, seen against the backdrop of Roman social history.[3]

Thus, we use close reading to analyze all three aspects we study in the texts. Concerning the scrutiny of the stories in terms of social history, we examine each text sequentially, i.e., we read it sentence by sentence to see how the narrative is structured, and what facets of Roman social history it appeals to. In this context, we pay attention both to the explicit wording in the stories, and to the associations evoked by particular motifs, modes of description, etc.

If these associations are implicit, they are only recoverable through an intertextual reading, in which the stories are read with and against other ancient sources to tease out their implications. The concept of "intertextuality" implies that all texts – both written and oral – are absorptions and transformations of earlier texts,[4] and intertexts provide the cultural background against which individual texts become intelligible as they resonate with the meanings of a larger tradition.[5] We have worked from the particular to the general, since an individual motif in the stories has triggered an investigation of other contexts in which it occurred in Roman culture, and of the ways in which it was exploited there.[6] The texts referring to these contexts are then our intertexts.

As for studying the verbalisation of emotion, the close reading of the texts proceeds along two lines: firstly, through a reading of the text to identify emotion words (either nouns, verbs or adjectives) constituting the explicit level of the verbalisation of emotion, and secondly, a reading to discern crucial motifs in the stories, be they characters, aspects of settings, etc., which are then interpreted intertextually to reconstruct their emotional charge in Roman culture.

In the first case, ancient philosophies of the emotions, from Aristotle onward, are a particularly rich comparative material, both because they articulate the nuances of emotion words (sometimes in an admittedly pedantic and scholarly way), and because they more or less openly address the beliefs of members of the non-elite, frequently in a polemical vein. In the second, the reading incorporates intertexts drawn from a wider range of written, often literary, sources in which these emotional charges are actually spelled out.

Regarding the therapeutic functions of the stories, we use the close readings in terms of social history and emotions to isolate elements of the stories that could possess therapeutic significance. We do this by juxtaposing these earlier readings with ancient therapies of the emotions on the one hand and corresponding modern therapies on the other, in order to discern the therapeutic strategies at work in the texts. This mixture of ancient and modern therapeutic perspectives has been favoured methodologically for two reasons: firstly, because ancient therapies furnish specifically ancient points of view whereas applying modern perspectives may be anachronistic, and secondly, because ancient and modern therapies are not as mutually exclusive entities as you might expect.

Ancient philosophies are actually quite alive and well in contemporary psychotherapy. Modern cognitive-behavioural therapy relies heavily on the ideas of ancient Stoicism,[7] for example, and other forms of cognitive therapy have adapted the Socratic method of constant questioning, drawing universal conclusions based on concrete cases, and admitting the impossibility of full knowledge, to the exploration of important issues and life goals.[8] In a more philosophical vein, Martha Nussbaum's *The Therapy of Desire* (1994) and *Upheavals of Thought* (2001)[9] sparked a recognition of the continued relevance of ancient philosophies and therapies of emotion in our own time. We agree with the standpoint that the ancient philosophers have much to teach us, but we also think that in order to elucidate the efficacy of their therapeutic methods, we have to draw on modern therapies which help identify and articulate certain implicit assumptions.

It is obvious that an ancient and a modern therapeutic method will never map onto each other perfectly; too much has happened in the intervening

two thousand years or more for that to be possible. Instead, we use modern therapies to tease out the therapeutic implications of the ancient ones. This fusion of ancient and modern therapies is the result of our own analysis, and could not be said to represent any uniquely "ancient" perspective on therapy. Similarly, just as in Nussbaum's *The Therapy of Desire*, material derived from extant ancient philosophy has been applied to a new and different context, in her case to the philosophical education of a semi-fictitious female student of philosophy,[10] in ours to stories of oral origin not previously examined in terms of their therapeutic functions. In the selection of ancient and modern therapies that are brought to bear on each particular case, we have not preferred any one school of thought over others. Some recur more often in the discussion, but this is because they happen to fit with the therapeutic strategies we discern in the stories.

The theoretical approach adopted in this book derives from research on emotion in many different fields, including anthropology and ethnology, sociology, history, ancient history, and psychology. The basic premise on which the entire study is based is that ancient Roman emotions have to be understood on their own terms. Even though we generally speak of them in English translation for the benefit of readers not fluent in Latin and Greek, we have to keep in mind that Roman emotions were not necessarily identical to our modern Western emotions. In fact, they seldom are.[11] They were often defined differently, both in themselves and in relation to other emotions. Hence, examining the verbalisation of emotions in the narratives requires attention to their culture-specific meanings, and to culture-specific ways of linking them.

In concert with most ancient and many modern philosophies, we view emotions as far from divorced from reason. We also regard emotions as intrinsically tied to values. This makes ours a cognitivist account; though we do not deny that the elicitation of emotion could well bypass conscious thought, the types of fear and other emotions we discuss would not be fully comprehensible without reference to thought. Such a point of departure is also necessary for the success of the forms of therapy discussed in this book: emotion must be to some extent subject to reason in order for it to be possible to reflect on and change.

1.2 The Structure of this Book

Representations of Fear is divided into four parts, beginning with *Introduction and Background* (Chapters 1 & 2). Chapter 1 describes the purpose of

the book as outlined above, and includes a programmatic statement on the emotive-therapeutic approach taken to the material. Chapter 2 discusses the characteristics and functions of folklore generally, the state of knowledge on ancient oral traditions, and principles for the identification and interpretation of folklore in ancient literature.

The second part of the book, *Coping with Emotions*, opens with Chapter 3 treating the prior research on emotion and fear that has inspired us in our work, with a particular focus on the history and anthropology of emotion. Since these subfields assume that the expressions and evaluations of emotions are culturally specific, they square well with the ancient testimony which clearly demonstrates that ancient emotions were not necessarily construed in the modern Western way. This forms the theoretical backbone of the book.

As mentioned above, ancient philosophy – with its focus on emotions and how to deal with these – forms an interpretative backdrop against which the stories of oral origin are read. Chapter 4 consists of a delineation of ancient conceptions of emotion, drawn from ancient philosophy from Aristotle to the Epicureans and Stoics. Here we also treat ancient therapies of emotion, focusing on Aristotelian catharsis, Epicurean antidotes to empty fears, and Stoic therapy. We use these perspectives in the subsequent chapters, in concert with modern ones, to explain how the narratives might have functioned therapeutically.

The analysis is divided into two overarching parts according to the common themes we have discerned in them. The first – *The Family under Threat* – deals with stories in which the survival of the family is a persistent theme (Chapters 5, 6 & 7). The second part – *Loci of Fear in and outside the City* – treats man's relation to his urban surroundings (Chapters 8, 9 & 10).

Chapter 5 discusses the relationship between envy and fear in stories of child-killing demons and witches found in Diodorus Siculus, Ovid and other authors, while situating the narratives in the context of Roman demography and family ideals. We suggest that the stories could be used to externalise both threat and blame for the death of a child or young wife, in the manner of modern narrative therapy in which a "problem" is separated from the "self" by giving it an independent status. This analysis extends the argument advanced in earlier research that these creatures served as scapegoats. We also propose that the stories functioned as a form of preparation for future ills, consistent with Cicero's description of the Stoic practice of prerehearsal.

Chapter 6 continues the theme of the vulnerability of the family in an examination of stories of negligent nurses found in Ovid and Aelian, and the ways in which they represent fear, grief, regret and remorse. Trading on the ambivalent status of the nurse in Roman society, the narratives seem to suggest

that the figure of the nurse was a focus of emotion in Roman culture; she was a "sticky object" in Sara Ahmed's sense,[12] tending to attract emotion more easily than other social roles. We advance the view that the figure of the nurse was "good to think with"[13] because she revealed the extent of the emotion management required to uphold the common practice of wet-nursing, on the part of both parents and nurses.

Chapter 7 again concentrates on the vulnerability of the family, but shifts the focus to stories of young men being seduced by witches and man-eating demons in Apuleius and Flavius Philostratus. The dangers involved in succumbing to passion and lust for unknown women are lucidly illustrated, and we argue that the narratives could have functioned as a vehicle for an Epicurean-style therapy on the one hand, by putting the dangers of passion before the eyes or, viewing them from another point of view, as instruments of tragic-like catharsis.

Chapter 8 discusses the emotional topography of the Roman city and its surroundings, describing the emotions elicited by specific places, such as cemeteries, crossroads, roads and inns. Inspired by the concept of "rhythmanalysis" introduced by Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier,[14] we place special emphasis on the temporal cycles affecting the emotional experience of a place, particularly the shift between day and night. That different places after nightfall evoked fear resonates with similar findings by human geographers such as Rachel Pain.[15]

Chapter 9 examines ghost stories in Apuleius, Valerius Maximus, Plautus and others, in relation to the fear of being left unburied. We discuss the fear of ghosts as an expression of superstition according to the elite point of view, and the reverence shown in burying restless ghosts. The philosophical therapies for the fear of death advanced by Epicureans, Stoics and Cynics, all boiling down to some form of "death is nothing to us", are then contrasted to the consolation offered by the folkloric stories: if all else fails and you do become a restless ghost, follow the examples given in these stories, and you will be buried eventually.

Chapter 10 delves into the dangers of the city, in stories from Aelian and Pliny the Elder of octopuses emerging through city sewers or climbing over trees to feast on salted fish; these are complemented by a similar story in Pliny of a killer whale feasting on raw hides in the port of Ostia. We discuss the symbolism of the octopus and the fear and disgust elicited by it. We argue that the gluttonous octopus is cast as a symbol of human behavior, being an embodiment of the vice of intemperance or luxury, and propose a Stoic therapy – coupled with modern narrative therapy – which questions both the

pleasure of submitting to it, and the tendency, then as now, to assign blame for it to individuals.

Finally, the book closes with a final discussion of the therapies of fear advanced in the stories: Chapter 11. Here we bring the emotive-therapeutic argument to a new level, focusing on the general processes of verbalisation and therapy we judge to be at work. We suggest that scapegoating and attributing blame to sticky objects are two complementary procedures that are resorted to in distinct situations. Scapegoating seems to be the favoured procedure in cases of sudden misfortune, whereas attributing blame to sticky objects is preferred when a higher degree of personal responsibility is ascribed to the victim. We also maintain that the therapeutic power of the stories lies in their ability to provide a space for reflection on the difficulties in life. This ability is partly dependent on the nature of narrative itself, and partly on the use of particular narrative techniques. Distancing and identification are singled out as important tools for achieving a therapeutic effect.

2 Oral Traditions in the Ancient Literature

Finely wrought pieces of storytelling, pithy sayings and clever riddles constituting oral traditions often labelled "verbal art" abound in ancient texts. While the Homeric poems have long been at the centre of attention in this regard, and more recently also Herodotus, it is less well known that oral traditions have been incorporated into many other types of text.[1] A variety of authors have included these traditions in their works – as a deliberate literary device or unconsciously – and thus preserving them for posterity.

Living in a literate world, however, classical scholars and ancient historians have tended to downplay the immense importance of the spoken word and oral traditions in antiquity. Unquestionably, the literate culture of the period was highly developed, and it has endowed us with some of the finest works in the history of literature. Nevertheless, the influence of oral traditions is evident in many different texts and genres of literature, such as poems,[2] novels,[3] historical works,[4] geographical works,[5] religious[6] and mythological works,[7] philosophical works, works of science and medicine,[8] encyclopaedias, etc. In the present work, we have focused on a number of stories deriving from a variety of authors flourishing under the Roman Empire, representing a wide span of literary genres.

Folklorists, who specialise in researching oral traditions and other forms of folklore, have similarly tended to disregard the rich array of folklore contained in ancient texts. This is partly due to the lack of knowledge of the Greek and Latin language and literature, and partly to the strong orientation to contemporary cultures in modern folkloristic scholarship.

The nature of survival of these traditions constitutes a source-critical problem. This chapter endeavours to give an introduction to how these oral traditions can be traced in the literary record, and it is aimed at both those who have a background in either classics/ancient history or folklore. This has a number of consequences for the structure and forms of argumentation. Since we assume that most readers will be familiar with only one of these fields, it is necessary to spell out basic concepts, methods and theories of each field in a manner that might seem superfluous for the initiated, but that is crucial for those who are not.

2.1 The Functions and Characteristics of Folklore

For our present purposes, we have settled on a definition of folklore as consisting of oral traditions or folk narrative, folk belief, folk customs and mentalities or world views considered in their sociocultural contexts.[9] Of the four areas mentioned, mentalities and world views are the most important, as they provide the basis for narrative, belief and customs. Therefore, our focus will be on oral traditions as expressions of world view, while belief and customs figure only to the extent they relate to oral traditions.[10]

Folklore can be used for many ends, which are hardly ever mutually exclusive. Some functions, being on a more generalised level, are almost constant, whereas others, being dependent on the individual performer, the specific context of the performance and the mood of the audience, may vary considerably from one instance to the next.[11]

On the first level, the most obvious function of many forms and pieces of folklore is entertainment: it is performed in order to cheer up the audience, make it forget the hardships of everyday life, to excite and stimulate its feelings.[12] Thus, the entertaining function is not necessarily reduced to mere amusement, it might also be about connecting with the audience and engaging it emotionally. In the ancient literature, there are a number of examples of this, for instance the old woman trying to soothe a young maiden who has been kidnapped by robbers, in Apuleius' (b. *c.* AD 125) tale of Cupid and Psyche:

> … I'll promptly divert you with pleasing narratives and old wives' tales (*narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis*), and she began: "Once upon a time there was a king and queen in a certain city…" (*Erant in quadam civitate rex et regina…*)[13]

Secondly, folklore furnishes a way of categorising the world, of developing and justifying world views and, occasionally, of changing them. It is a strategy for making sense of our experiences, whatever they are, and of communicating them to others.

Thirdly, folklore might be employed in education, to socialise children and youths into the culture and society in which they live, teaching them common norms and values and rules of behaviour (see Chapter 2.2). Folklore can be used both to praise and to chastise. Fourthly, a similar function is evident in the world of adults, where folklore may serve as an instrument for exercising social control. Some of the stories we discuss in this book, such as the ones about child-killing demons and witches, are very obviously of this sort. This function basically promotes social cohesion, and as such, it is

also a tool for self-restraint: individuals utilise folklore to regulate their own behaviour, not just that of others.[14]

These four major functions might not be simultaneously present in all folklore, but they do tend to appear in combination. Within themselves, they comprehend several, more specific functions, and these should be identified as far as possible. In this book, we have attempted to give the reader a notion of the functions of the folklore discussed.

Folklore exhibits a number of characteristics that ought to be stated. Firstly, folklore was long conceived as orally transmitted. Scholars have conventionally distinguished between vertical transmission, the handing down of folklore from one generation to the next, and horizontal transmission, the communication of folklore between members of the same age group or generation.[15] A good example of the latter is children's lore, which mainly circulates in peer groups. Moreover, the preponderance of oral transmission does not preclude an extensive interaction between folklore and written literature in terms of content, form, function, etc. This kind of interaction is the direct prerequisite for the study of ancient folklore, which has been preserved in written texts.

Secondly, items of folklore generally have no named creator; they are anonymous, and are often viewed as belonging to the community as a whole.[16] Their original creators, who most certainly did exist – folklorists have abandoned the belief of their early colleagues that the composition of folklore was an entirely collective process – have managed to adapt their individual works to the patterns of local tradition, i.e., to traditionalise them,[17] and subsequent performers have continued this process, gradually hewing away at the idiosyncrasies and inserting more stereotyped features in their stead. This is necessary for the survival of the item; those failing to conform to common traditions often fall into oblivion when their creator has passed away.

Thirdly, there is no authoritative version of a story struggling for attention amidst a plethora of more or less defective variants.[18] Authoritative versions evolve when stories are committed to writing;[19] while in oral circulation, all versions are equally "correct" and valuable from a scholarly point of view, though not always equally well narrated. Performers are free to create their variants within the limits set by tradition as it is apprehended in their community[20] – their audience usually makes sure they do not deviate too much from accepted custom – or they can deliberately break the rules, producing parodies and travesties of traditional folklore.[21] In both instances, the performer might select different motifs for inclusion in each performance, changing them from one time to the next; the performer might add or subtract various episodes, restructuring the item of folklore in the process; the

performer may link diverse items of folklore together, forming new wholes. All of these activities are perfectly traditional, and they contribute to the prominence of variation in folklore.[22]

A form of variation that has received scant attention by folklorists, but that is of particular importance in the case of ancient oral traditions, is "genre variance", a term introduced by ancient folklore scholar William Hansen.[23] The genre to which a given item of folklore belongs is not a constant. Apart from those that stand on the borderline between different genres, mixing characteristics of several, performers may have definite preferences when it comes to genre, ones not shared by others living in a different culture or in another period.

For instance, the stories collected as folktales in nineteenth-century Europe were often told as legends in antiquity, at least judging by the written sources at our disposal. Whether this preference was exhibited by everyone, or whether it was peculiar to the largely upper-class authors creating our sources, remains to be established. However, the fervour with which they at least pretended to abhor and repress idle tales, typically told by "old wives" (see Chapter 2.2), suggests the latter. The stories may well have existed in both forms, and it is still noteworthy that so many chose to give them the form of the legend. This fact cannot be explained away by appealing to the biases of ancient authors alone.

The legends discussed in this book, however, do not exhibit this sort of variance as their counterparts in later folk traditions belong to the self-same genre from a folkloristic point of view.[24] Accordingly, they share the characteristic features of the oral legend:

- its relative brevity in comparison to the longer folktale;
- its setting in a realistic, everyday context – often quite precisely located in place and time – on which the wondrous and supernatural intrude rather than being part of the same magical world as in the folktale;
- its ideological thrust, as the legend is generally closely related to society's norms and values, which is especially evident in legends that furnish warning examples, pointing to the dire consequences of inappropriate behaviour.[25]

Legends also tend to explore the nature of threats to human existence, and identify what is most vulnerable to these threats – often "the physical, spiritual, or economic well-being of the community".[26] In traditional legends, threats can be supernatural or natural, come from inside or outside the community, or emerge from that grey zone of liminal space where the inside/outside distinction collapses.[27] Some of the threats discussed in this book are clearly located outside the community, for instance, child-killing demons (Chapter 5), whereas others are natural, such as monkeys (Chapter 6) and octopuses

(Chapter 10), and yet others are neither-nor, for example witches who both belong to the human community and step outside its bounds through their supernatural powers (Chapter 7).

Until the 1970s, belief was usually considered integral to the definition of legend as a genre. While this is no longer the case, the believability of legends is stressed instead; they might not be believed to be true by everyone, or even by the same person all the time, but they must have a certain air of authenticity that makes them functional as narratives of events that *could have happened*.[28] This is a common trait for both traditional rural legends and modern urban legends.[29] Originally conceived as qualitatively different from traditional rural legends due to their divergent subject matter, which was drawn from the circumstances of modern urban life, "modern" or "urban legends" have since been included in the larger fold of legends in general.[30] Here we appeal to this distinction mainly to call attention to the existence of counterparts to both traditional and modern legends in antiquity, and to indicate the field of research in which comparative material can be found.

Since folklore is usually performed in groups where most or all members are familiar with the local tradition, many things are left unsaid because it is unnecessary to mention them. The audience immediately recognises references to local sites, topical objects of debate, local events, and the common store of folklore.[31] This quality of oral performance has been described as "traditional elements reach[ing] out of the immediate instance in which they appear to the fecund totality of the entire tradition" whence they receive their resonance, and without knowledge of which they remain inscrutable. Some have called this phenomenon "traditional referentiality",[32] stressing its oral quality, while others have labelled it "intertextuality", appropriating the term from literary criticism[33] and implicitly emphasising the similarities between oral tradition and literature in this respect.

2.2 *Golden Tales* – Storytelling in the Roman World

Storytelling – oral traditions – clearly constituted an important part of Roman culture.[34] It appears to have been a popular pastime, a way of easing the tedium of travel, a means of making monotonous tasks such as spinning somewhat less arduous, as a "soporific" sending children to sleep and so on.[35] In this chapter we will deliberate on who the storytellers were – professionals and non-professionals alike – and what we know about the social belongings of these. We will discuss where, when and why the stories were told, and also

to what audiences these stories were narrated, for what purposes, and what emotions these stirred.

Our knowledge of storytelling and storytellers, it has to be stressed, has many limits – and, not least, lacunae – and not surprisingly so. Many of the authors, who belonged to a male, educated elite, scorned storytelling and speak of storytellers with disdain or disinterest. In particular, our knowledge of professional storytellers is of a patchy nature,[36] for the elite – the emperor Augustus (reigned 27 BC–AD 14) being the sole exception we know of – had very little to do with these.

Professional storytellers – sedentary, living in large cities like Rome, or leading an itinerant life – formed a part of popular culture in the Roman world.[37] A passage in Pliny the Younger's (*c.* AD 61–*c.* 112) *Letters* refers to the calls of the storytellers who went about in towns offering a "golden tale" (*auream fabulam*) for anyone who could spare a penny (i.e., an *as*): "Have a penny ready and hear a golden tale…". [38] Professional storytellers seem to have attracted an audience in places where ordinary people gathered, for instance the *circus* (or hippodrome as the race-course was known in Greek) on days it was not in use for horse-races, as shown by a quote from Dio Chrysostom's (*c.* AD 40/50–after 110) *Discourses*:

> While walking through the Hippodrome, I remember once seeing many people there, each doing something different: one was playing the flute, another was dancing, yet another was doing a juggler's trick, a fourth was reading a poem, a fifth singing, a sixth telling some narrative or myth (*ton de historian tina ê muthon diêgoumenon*)…[39]

Suetonius (b. *c.* AD 70) mentions that the emperor Augustus brought in professional storytellers, probably from places like this, to entertain at dinners. Moreover, he sent for storytellers late at night when he had trouble sleeping.[40] Not a single other source from the Imperial period mentions professional storytellers narrating stories for other emperors – or indeed any other person belonging to the elite – suggesting perhaps that this was viewed as vulgar.[41] Augustus liked to flaunt his simple habits, however, habits suggesting that he had much in common with ordinary people, and it may well be that his liking for storytelling and storytellers fit into this image that he wanted to project of himself.[42]

Our knowledge of storytelling by non-professionals is considerably less limited, though very far from complete, than that of professional storytellers. Our best source for storytelling among the upper echelons of Roman society comes from Pliny the Younger's *Letters*; he writes about marvellous tales being told at the dinner tables. Beginning with the words: "I've happened upon a story that is true (*materiam veram*) though it is more similar to fable (*simillimam*

fictae)", he tells the wondrous tale of a boy who befriended a dolphin, which Pliny the Younger had heard at a dinner-party.[43] In the same literary work we find other examples of migratory legends, such as the story of a haunted house in Athens (discussed in Chapter 9.3),[44] demonstrating the existence of a strong oral tradition even among the educated elite.

The social belonging of the greater part of storytellers portrayed in the ancient texts, whether professional or non-professional, female or male, however, is the lower end of the social scale. Some are portrayed as poor, others are rendered as reasonably well off, but none can be called a privileged – and certainly not an educated – elite. The storytelling contexts are, as we will see below, set in both urban and rural surroundings. While taking into account that many of the examples we will discuss below are of fictional characters, they are nevertheless likely to reflect Roman reality to a reasonable extent, as they had to be in order to be plausible to their audience.

As mentioned above (see Chapter 2.1), in his novel *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius lets a nameless woman – old and worn out, working for a band of brigands, and derogatorily described as a drunkard – tell the magic tale of *Cupid and Psyche* to a young woman; English-speakers often call this type of tale "fairytale", and its chief characteristic is the mixing of supernatural and natural elements.[45] Correspondingly, in Petronius' (d. AD 66) novel *Satyrica* the freedman Niceros tells the hair-raising story of how he had once encountered a werewolf, beginning with the words:

> "And so, let's have some fun, though I fear these scholars will scoff at me. They'll see, I'll tell it anyway. What do I care who's laughing? It's better to be laughed at than scoffed at".[46]

The scene is set at the house of Trimalchio, a fictive figure who is immensely wealthy, a former slave with little education and no brains whatsoever, and above all a man of astonishingly vulgar habits. For a reader belonging to the educated elite, it was only natural that storytelling had such a prominent place in a context of this kind. Turning to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* again, we find a story of a similar type being told at a wealthy lady's – Byrrhena's – dinner-party. This is an account of the ill-fated Thelyphron who was disfigured by evil witches.[47] In the format of the novel, the respective authors transformed migratory legends usually told as having happened to the friend of a friend into first-hand accounts narrated by these fictional characters.

Although the ancient authors often appear to have associated storytelling with the lower end of society, there is nothing to suggest that it was all together excluded in elite settings. Possibly the scarcity of passages in the literary sources relating to storytelling amongst the elites, however, might mirror that it was a

less common pastime. Turning from the social belonging of the storytellers to the issue of their gender, focusing on the role of women and men respectively, it is clear that there were differences. This in turn brings us to the question of the contexts in which they performed, their audiences and their repertoires.[48]

In the source material, there is a bias for women's role in storytelling, and there can be little doubt that women played a significant role in the oral transmission of stories.[49] We are, however, at risk of overemphasising women's role, and correspondingly downplaying the role of men in this oral transmission. This bias is mirrored in the male authors' derogatory use of the term "old wives' tales", a use suggesting that storytelling was predominantly a female practice.

The term "old wives' tales" – *graon hythlos* or *muthos graos* as they were called in Greek, or *aniles fabulae* as they were labelled in Latin – was used by the ancient authors when they wanted to dismiss others' views and arguments.[50] It was also used of literature held in disregard, such as the works of Petronius and Apuleius (see Chapter 2.4), who indeed included a great deal of oral traditions in their work.[51] From our perspective, the most important use of the term was to designate traditional tales of various sorts, not necessarily always in a negative sense.[52]

The concept of *aniles fabulae* was clearly not only used in referring to female, but in some cases also male, storytelling. An example of this can be found in Horace (65–8 BC): a story which the poet labels as an old wives' tale is nonetheless told by a man, Horace's rustic neighbour Cervius: that of the Country Mouse and the City Mouse.[53] A synonym of *aniles fabulae* was *fabulae nutricum* – that is, "nurses' tales"[54] – a term no less pejorative. These brief passages in the ancient literature – though in many cases not concerned with storytelling but rather matters regarded to be of a graver nature, such as literature or philosophy, nevertheless provide glimpses into the world of storytelling.

One reason why we have so much literary evidence concerning women – nurses in particular – telling stories could well be a reflection of social reality. The male authors, who mostly belonged to the elite, had in many cases been taken care of by nurses in their early childhood;[55] hence they were well acquainted with the stories they used to tell. Their contacts with men would primarily have been with teachers, with their fathers and other male relatives most likely to be highly educated, whereas their personal experience of male storytelling among the non-elite must have been limited.

In the minds of the male authors, these nurses may have seemed "old", but when they took care of them as children, there is nothing to suggest that they were in any way old.[56] The disdain for these stories and the storytelling

emanated as a result of the vast differences in status and education between the male authors and their former nurses. The majority of the male authors were freeborn citizens, belonging to the wealthy elite, and above all were men in a male-dominated society. The female nurses were, in contrast, often slaves or former slaves, often of "foreign" origin, or poor freeborn women, i.e., women with limited economic means,[57] living in a society that had misogynic traits.

The audience was – as the name "nurses' tales" suggests – children, and the stories were often told at bedtime. Stories of dreaded demons – Akko, Alphito, Lamia, Mormô and other monstrous creatures[58] – and also fear-invoking beasts such as wolves,[59] were told to children in order to make them obey, and most importantly to steer them away from dangers of different sorts.[60] They were correspondingly told to comfort and calm children who had received a spanking for being disobedient,[61] or simply to amuse them.[62] Less frightening stories of the same bugbears were told to children to calm them and to put them to sleep.[63]

Other contexts in which stories were told to distract children were at religious festivals, ceremonies which could otherwise have been tiresome.[64] Sometimes stories were told with a clear moral message, not least the *Fables* of Aesop (sixth century BC), which formed part of children's upbringing.[65] This is not to say that all approved of them; the young philosopher Menippus in Flavius Philostratus' (AD *c*. 170–*c*. 247) *Life of Apollonius* dismissed them as: "… frogs, … donkeys and nonsense for old women and children to chew on".[66]

Women also told tales for other adult women while working. For storytelling was also a way of making tedious tasks less tiring, such as spinning, working by the light of a lamp, as witnessed by a number of authors.[67] The perhaps best-known example of this in Latin literature is found in Ovid's (43 BC–AD 17) *Metamorphoses*:

> Only the daughters of Minyas are indoors, disturbing the festival with their unseasonable spinning, either spinning the wool or turning the threads with their thumb, or remaining close to the loom and besetting their maids with work. One of them, while drawing out the thread with a nimble thumb, says: "While other women are idle and assemble in throngs to these invented religious rites, let us – who favour Pallas, a far better goddess – lighten the useful work of our hands with talk, and let's take turns to tell something to our idle ears, lest time seem long."[68]

Storytelling of a similar kind as in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – but not with a woman, but rather a man telling a tale – is found in Longus' (fl. late second or early third century AD) novel *Daphnis and Chloë*. In a scenic setting on the Greek island of Lesbos, the young goat-herd Daphnis tells his beloved Chloë a story about a shepherdess who was turned into a bird by the gods.[69] As

mentioned above, the most probable reason for our lack of knowledge of male storytelling in working contexts is that the male authors – being part of the elite – had little insight and even less interest in the working lives of men of the lower echelons of society.

Another aspect that has to be taken into consideration, however, is that preferably the work should be sedentary and the surroundings quiet, suggesting perhaps that storytelling while working was somewhat more common among women. Philip Stadter's study of North Carolina oral traditions and how they can work as an analogue in understanding storytelling traditions in the ancient world, provides interesting insights into how it may have worked in the past. One woman learnt her storytelling repertoire as a young girl from her mother while working with wool, whereas a male storyteller learnt his stock of stories as a child from his father during work breaks, after hoeing part of a field.[70]

There is in fact a fair amount of evidence for male storytelling in other types of contexts – for instance traveller's tales – stories told to make slow and tedious travel more pleasant and less tiresome. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, the narrator Lucius joins two fellow travellers while travelling by horse through Thessaly in central Greece, and he asks one of them to tell his story:

> No indeed, I said, share your talk with me; not that I'm a curious person, but I'm one who wants to learn everything, or at least many things. At the same time, the pleasant delight of stories (*fabularum lepida iucunditas*) will smooth out the unevenness of the ridge we are climbing.[71]

His fellow traveller Aristomenes then goes on to tell a horrendous story of having encountered two evil witches, of his fate of being forced into exile by them, and moreover of the brutal murder of his good friend Socrates (see Chapters 7.1 & 9.1). This was a story that Lucius clearly conceived of as in equal parts pleasant and entertaining:

> But I do believe him [i.e., Aristomenes], by Hercules, and offer my deserved thanks for diverting us with the good fellowship provided by a pleasant story (*lepidae fabulae festivitate nos avocavit*); in short making me escape the labour and boredom of the rough long road. I think my carrier is happy for that favour too: I've been brought all the way to the gates of this city, not on his back, but on my ears.[72]

Travelling by land – walking, riding on a mule or horse, or in a carriage – was very time-consuming.[73] Listening to stories,[74] singing[75] or simply conversing,[76] was a good way of easing travel, as Publilius Syrus (fl. 46–29 BC) phrased it: "An eloquent companion on the road is as good as a carriage".[77] Travelling by sea was in one sense faster, yet the trips were often longer, and here we find an example of this in Petronius' *Satyrica*. A man tells the

story of *The Widow of Ephesus* for an audience consisting predominantly – but not solely – of men, during a sea-voyage.[78] Not surprisingly, storytelling also took place at the inns where travellers stopped for a night's rest.[79] As aforementioned, storytelling was also part of socialising at dinner-parties, contexts that included men and women alike, such as we find in the examples from Petronius' and Apuleius' novels.[80]

Affecting the emotions of an audience lies at the very heart of storytelling, for stories are meant to stir emotions.[81] What emotions the storyteller tried to arouse depended on a number of factors: the audience's gender, age and status in society, the time they were told, and not least in what context this storytelling took place. It is clear that depending on the audience – children, women or men – stories of very different character were told, resulting in different emotional responses from the audience.[82] Turning from the ancient to the "modern" world, it can work as an analogy, for instance Henry Glassie's studies of a traditional community in Northern Ireland, Ballymenone. Here he found that the storytellers evoked a range of different emotions, from humorous and amusing tales bringing about laughter, to stories of pain and sad events creating a melancholic mood.[83]

Both ancient and modern examples demonstrate that the purpose of narrating a specific story in a certain way was to create a particular emotional response. It was not always that the entire audience reacted with the same emotions, however. Let us begin with one such example, already mentioned above: *The Widow of Ephesus*. This is a story of a widow mourning her late husband with such zeal that she refuses to leave the grave-vault in which he is laid to rest. She is famed for her *pudicitia* – sexual virtue – and loyalty, and she will not part from her husband's side. Refusing drink and food, she is in danger of suffering starvation when a young and handsome soldier – keeping guard over the corpses of some crucified criminals – takes pity on her.

She soon forgets her late husband, and falls in love with the soldier. Within a few days she commits acts that are truly shocking, for in the vault – hidden behind closed doors – she has sex with the soldier for several nights in a row. But while the soldier is neglecting his duty, a corpse is stolen from the cross, a body which is replaced by the widow's late husband. Her fidelity was long forgotten, her piety was something of the past, when she callously exclaimed: "… I would prefer a dead man hanging to killing a live one".

The story is told with the intent to show female fickleness, how virtue is often followed by vice when it comes to women.[84] The story is narrated by a man, Eumolpus, and results in a range of different emotions among the audience: it produced guffaw among the sailors, it caused a woman, Tryphaena, to become embarrassed and blush. Moreover, it aroused the anger

of the captain of the ship, Lichas, who had been cuckolded and deceived by another of the male characters, Encolpius. Lichas views the story as a form of mockery or derision, and therefore refuses to laugh.[85]

It is clear that storytelling was used as a means to comfort, in some cases making use of humour. One example of this is found in a fictional biography of the fabulist Aesop, the *Aesop Romance*, a work of imperial Roman date.[86] When Aesop is held in prison in the sanctuary of Delphi, awaiting a death sentence, wrongfully being accused of temple theft, a friend comes to visit him. Aesop's friend is deeply distraught, so touched that he breaks into tears, and Aesop tries to console him by narrating humorous stories. He begins first to narrate a story of a widow seduced by a ploughman, and then one of a simple-minded girl who loses her virginity.[87] Both stories were of a sexual nature, and were clearly meant to provoke laughter, which appears to be typical of male storytelling.

The purpose of storytelling is often pleasure – sometimes to amuse, in other cases to create that titillating sensation that horror brings – which is something we can postulate but not prove when it comes to storytelling in the ancient world.[88] Let us first look at one possible example of this. Aristomenes' horrendous story of the fate of his friend Socrates in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* – being brutally butchered by two evil witches, and his body hastily covered in sandy soil and not receiving proper funerary rites[89] (see Chapters 7.1 & 9.1) – is described by the listener Lucius as "a pleasant story".[90]

Our second example is a more apparent instance of how stories were told to stir a titillating sensation, namely the aforementioned Niceros' story in Petronius' *Satyrica*. The host – Trimalchio – urges his guest Niceros to tell his story with the words: "I beg you, make me happy and tell us what befell you". Having heard of this horrific creature, a werewolf, Trimalchio exclaims: "… my hair stood on end…".[91]

Ghastly stories of fearful creatures – such as Thelyphron's story of witches trying to dismember the dead body of a young man, but ending up disfiguring Thelyphron himself – could also result in a different reaction: "As soon as Thelyphron had finished this story, the drinking-companions, intoxicated as they were by wine, laughed immoderately once again".[92] Other peoples' misfortunes were clearly considered entertaining and fun, for instance a story told about a poor workman who was cuckolded, also in Apuleius, which is described as "pleasant" (*lepidam fabulam*).[93]

Turning to female storytelling, and the magic tale of *Cupid and Psyche* in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* already referred to, this is clearly of a different nature. In this case, the story is told to comfort a distressed young girl held captive by brigands, by an old woman working as the brigands' cook.[94] The

novel's narrator – Lucius, who has been transformed into an ass, and is therefore unobtrusively present at the scene – tells of his reaction to the "crazy and drunken old woman['s]" story, pronouncing it "a pretty tale" (*bellam fabellam*).[95]

As we have seen above, stories were narrated at convivial gatherings held in the evenings, women were engaged in storytelling while working in the light of the lamp, and stories were told to children at bed-time. One can speculate if this had an influence on topics, or if the picture furnished by our sources is somewhat biased, for a frequently recurring theme revolves around different supernatural and fear-invoking creatures: witches, werewolves and monsters such as Lamia and Mormô. It is clear that stories of monstrous creatures – like Lamia and Mormô – scared young children.[96] In this respect there was a marked difference between children and adults. Stories narrated to the former resulted in a feeling of fear, whereas the latter were left with a titillating and altogether pleasant sensation.

Many stories were in all probability told with the purpose of producing a sense of marvel and awe, such as the myths of human beings getting turned into birds and beasts.[97] Stories of this kind are likely to have stirred other emotions too, such as melancholia, for instance, the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, told by one of the daughters' of Minyas in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[98] Some stories even moved the storyteller to tears: "… my nurse told me stories (*katemuthologei*) gracefully, soothingly, and even weeping over some of them".[99]

2.3 Identifying and Interpreting Folklore in Literature

In the scholarly study of the interrelation between folklore and literature more generally, three distinct perspectives have been dominant, and although there are problematic aspects of several of them, all have valuable contributions to make to the examination of folklore in literature. The first of these approaches sees folklore as a kind of original, oral literature preceding the written. The concept of folklore implicit in this strand of research tends to emphasise song (particularly ballads and epics) and prose narrative (folktales and legends) to the exclusion of belief and customs. Since folklore is viewed as temporally antecedent, and literature is seen as evolving from folklore, they are taken to be similar in character; they constitute different stages in the evolution of culture.

In early formulations and enactments of this position, folklore is often evaluated according to literary criteria. Bishop Thomas Percy (1729–1811), Sir

Walter Scott (1771–1832) and the Brothers Jacob (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859), all pioneers of the Romantic interest in folklore, assumed that oral literature was better if it was "improved", i.e., edited or rewritten.[100] In current research, oral-formulaic theory is no doubt the most important representative of this first approach, with its study of the function and use of oral formulas, themes and story-patterns in Homeric, medieval and contemporary epic. Here, however, folklore has increasingly been interpreted in terms of its peculiarly oral qualities, suggesting a move away from the literary focus evinced earlier. The principal contribution of oral-formulaic theory to the study of folklore and literature is perhaps the recognition that traces of orality can still be discerned in early literatures, and that they must be interpreted in their orality to be fully understood. Although those days are past when the identification of formulas in literary works automatically warranted assigning them an oral origin, extensive use of formulas is a typical feature of oral poetic composition, and can be examined to point up potential oral derivation or influences.[101]

The second approach, often referred to as "lore in lit", relies on the presupposition that folklore functions as a cultural resource for the author. In its strongest formulation, this stance portrays folklore as virtually inescapable. The author can hardly avoid incorporating folklore into his works, because he is a member of his own culture, and folklore is an inevitable part of that culture.[102] More mildly put, the writer re-creates culture and society – since "literature provides a fictional lifeworld" – and folklore, as part of that culture and society, will slip into the work as well, as an element of the life reflected in it.[103] This incorporation can be unconscious, but in general, scholars have more or less assumed that the folklore has been consciously adopted, and thus attempted to elucidate the intentions of the author in doing so. Furthermore, analysis is based on the premise that folklore and literature are quite distinct entities and easily distinguishable; they are related but different.[104]

Many of these "lore in lit" studies have primarily been conceived within a literary framework: folklore is called upon to explain the literature, which takes centre stage. Conversely, when folklore is the chief concern, authors can be blamed for not sticking closely enough to the oral tradition.[105] Despite this ideological ballast, the "lore in lit" approach has developed very useful methods for both the identification and interpretation of folklore in literature. After dropping the requirement of direct influence on an author – folklore culled from literary sources and accounts is still folklore, even though circulated in a written medium – source hunting could be abandoned in favour of more analytically oriented perspectives.[106]

Nevertheless, the identification of folklore in literature is still an important pursuit, and here folklorists have a well-established methodology, codified from the late 1920s onward.[107] In brief, it consists of isolating the recurring elements of a story or other item of folklore and comparing these elements with those found in attested oral traditions. These elements function on different levels of the narratives. On the most basic level, the story is comprised of a string of motifs – individual characters, requisites, actions and results of action, spatial and temporal markers as well as formulae and formulaic numbers – that are arranged into a plot.[108] This plot in its entirety is called a type (taletype, legend type, etc.).

If an ancient story conforms to a type, this means that it has parallels in the oral traditions of other eras and geographical areas, and that the possibility of an oral origin may be considered (see Chapter 2.4). Although later traditions could have evolved from an ancient literary story, this assumption often appears untenable given the wide dissemination of many such stories.[109] However, important exceptions exist; scholars generally credit the ancient literary fable with being the origin of the European oral fable tradition.

The identification of folklore in literature must of course be complemented by analysis of its use in the given literary work. A number of general modes of adaptation have been isolated. In the first, authors draw on the generic structures of folklore, using these as a model in fashioning their own texts. In this instance, they are not adapting certain texts, but rather formal and stylistic conventions.

In the second, they utilise folklore as a repository of plot, and here particular folk narratives can furnish a model for the literary text. We will encounter a good example of this in the following subchapter, namely Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.[110] Often, these inclusions of folkloric plots contribute to an enrichment of the meanings of the work: they have a referential function. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon that authors transpose folklore into their work because it is an integral part of the culture and society they wish to depict; in this instance, they use the folklore mimetically, to represent a setting or everyday modes of interaction between people.[111]

2.4 Identifying and Interpreting Folklore in Ancient Literature

> This is what that crazy and drunken old crone narrated to the captive girl. But I, who was standing close by, by Hercules how I deplored not having writing-tablets and stylus to note down such a pretty tale.[112]

Having heard the magic tale of *Cupid and Psyche*, the main character in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, Lucius – who has been transmuted into an ass by magic – wished he had a stylus and writing-tablets to write down this "pretty tale".[113] This narrative is self-reflexive, for what we read is what the author himself, Apuleius, must have done: he wrote down oral stories he heard in order to incorporate them into his work. Here we have an example of oral traditions deliberately incorporated into a literary work, and scholarly studies have identified a significant number of originally oral narratives in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.[114]

The transmission of oral traditions found in ancient literature were in other cases less direct, and the authors may well have been unaware of the oral origins if they borrowed narratives from the works of other authors. Given the negative sentiments to what was dismissively termed "old wives' tales" (see Chapter 2.2), this may have been the case with some of the narratives identified as oral. Not surprisingly, the extent to which oral traditions can be found in literary works varies depending on whether the use was deliberate or not.

That a number of authors deliberately chose to include components of oral traditions in their literary works was a fact both noted and commented upon already in antiquity. In rare cases, it was perceived in a predominantly positive manner, such as in the case of Horace,[115] who both alludes to and also includes fables and other categories of oral narratives in his works.[116] Given the negative sentiments attached to all narratives described as old wives' tales, however, it is not surprising that authors who used oral traditions to a much larger extent than for instance Horace, were put in question in antiquity. This was the case with the Roman authors Apuleius and Petronius,[117] and the Greek author Herodotus and the fabulist Aesop.[118]

The oral traditions employed by the ancient authors comprise not only folklore such as legends, urban legends, novellas and so on – but also orally transmitted history which is also a form of folklore. This was the case with Pausanias (fl. *c.* AD 150), who for a period of twenty years travelled around Greece and collected local historical material, a material which he would combine with what was available through the written historical sources in his work *Description of Greece*. As a result, we find a number of legends – frequently of an etiological nature – in Pausanias' work, including a ghost-story not dissimilar to those discussed in this book (see Chapter 9.3).[119]

There were also those who actively collected different categories of oral traditions in order to publish compilations, such as the collection of jokes in *The Laughter-Lover* by Hierocles and Philagrius (third or fourth century AD).[120] While few of these works have survived to the present era, we know from the extant literary sources that a number of such works once existed.

Another example is the now lost collection of ribald novellas by Aristides of Miletos (*c.* 100 BC) known as *Milesian Tales*.[121]

One last category consists of narratives which closely resemble once living oral traditions, but which in all likelihood were inspired by this folklore rather than constituting a direct use of oral traditions. An example discussed in the present work is the author Lucian's (b. *c.* AD 120) *A True Story* (see Chapter 7.2), clearly a parody of, on the one hand, classical authors such as Homer and Herodotus, and on the other hand, tall tales in circulation.[122]

After this brief overview of oral traditions – i.e., folklore – in the ancient literary sources, the question of how one approaches this material must be posed. For natural reasons, most studies of oral traditions, both of the actual narratives and of the narrators' or storytellers' performance, have been made on living cultures since the early nineteenth century and onwards. Turning from the present and recent past to antiquity, however, has a number of implications, for as Graham Anderson has observed:

> One of the major stumbling blocks in studying ancient as opposed to modern folklore is that almost by definition, it is not a living science: it can only be studied as a body of evidence and no longer as a living organism.[123]

But while the object of our study – the once living oral traditions in Roman antiquity – has in one sense died with its tradition bearers, and survives to our day only in the form of shorter or longer passages in written literature, the stories themselves are in many cases alive and well. Numerous migratory narratives of the same "type", i.e., stories with essentially the same plot and structure, are known to have existed for centuries and even millennia. As William Hansen has aptly put it: "in light of their longevity [they] must rank among the world's most successful creations".[124] These narratives are in many cases very geographically widespread. Folklorists studying oral narrators speaking different languages and living at very long distances from each other, have noticed that they often told tales which resembled each other so closely that one must assume some sort of genetic relationship.[125]

Moreover, if we focus more specifically on the Mediterranean area, it is clear that oral traditions have survived since antiquity, as shown by a related category of evidence: the names of different supernatural creatures. For instance, when John Lawson collected oral traditions in Greece around 1900, he noted that stories about *lamiae*, *gelloudes* and *striges* (i.e., female demons and witches) were to be found in abundance. These supernatural creatures are also found in Byzantine and later literary sources, suggesting a continuity of oral tradition throughout time.[126] In Italy, in turn, the *Mammone* who

frightens children has been associated with the ancient *Mormô*, who had a similar function.[127]

In approaching the ancient literature in search for material of oral origin, we can use the living traditions of the present and recent past as an analogue, and as we shall see below the majority of the methods we have for identifying this oral material are through the use of analogy. When it comes to our understanding of the performances made by storytellers in antiquity, and how the narratives were received by their audiences, analogy with the present has also been proven to be a useful tool (see Chapter 2.2).[128]

By what means can we then identify the oral material preserved in the ancient texts? It is not infrequent that a specific text – or a type – suspected to be of oral origin is identified as such by several of the seven, partially overlapping, criteria discussed below:

1. The narrative or other text suspected to be oral in specific plot and structure resembles traditions known to be oral, i.e. that they are of the same folkloric type.
2. The author alludes to a narrative by mentioning its traditional name. These narratives are either known from other literary texts, or the name of the narrative is such that there is reason to suspect that it may be an oral narrative in circulation at the time, but one unknown to us.
3. The opening phrases resemble traditions known to be oral; the author sometimes begins a story like traditional storytellers do with words comparable to "Once upon a time".
4. The author describes a storytelling context, before telling a story which in nature, or in specific plot and structure, strongly resembles traditions known to be oral.
5. The author specifies that he has used a story that he has heard rather than read, before telling a story which in nature, or in specific plot and structure, strongly resembles traditions known to be oral.

The active collection of oral traditions by authors writing historical or antiquarian works was done by some ancient authors. Beyond containing local historical traditions, their works also contain stories which resemble different folkloric traditions, allowing the criteria:

6. The author is known to have collected oral traditions and presents a story which in nature, or in specific plot and structure, strongly resembles traditions known to be oral.

The active collection of oral traditions to form collections of jokes or fables and suchlike categories of folklore was done by a number of ancient authors. These genres were traditionally oral, and can be compared in a more general sense with living oral traditions of the same type, allowing the criterion:

7. An item in a collection of texts whose genres were traditionally oral strongly resembles an item of the same type of material found in living oral traditions.

After this brief overview of the methods through which oral traditions can be traced in ancient literature, it is perhaps appropriate to discuss them in greater detail, beginning with the first criterion of identification of oral traditions: narratives of the same folkloric type.[129]

The basics of this way of identifying oral traits in ancient literature were laid out already in the mid-nineteenth century by one of the pioneers of folklore studies: Wilhelm Grimm. In 1857, Grimm presented a study of the Polyphemus-story in the *Odyssey*, in which Homer's variant of this story was compared to a number of closely related international folktales in regard to plot and content. Through this comparison with traditions in some cases known to represent oral traditions, Grimm could convincingly argue that this was the origin of Homer's tale too. Folktales of the same type – of Aarne-Thompson-Uther type 1137, known as *The Blinded Ogre* – are attested in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia and North America.[130] Employing this method of identification, a fair number of folktales,[131] and also a few urban legends,[132] have been discovered in ancient literature.

Not only have narratives of the same folkloric type been discovered in a number of living oral cultures, they are also found in literary works of different date, written in diverse languages by authors representing various cultures. This demonstrates that the same oral narrative – an international tale – has been picked up by authors independently of each other. As put by Jack Winkler: "Sindbad and Odysseus both drive hot stakes into a giant's eye(s): the specificity of detail seems to demand a connection, but it need not be that Shahrazad read Homer".[133] Having argued that this was the case with this specific tale, it is important to stress that in other cases stories are similar in structure and plot because an – originally oral – story has been picked up by one author, and that this is then used by another author.[134]

In this context, however, it is important to point to the fact that variation is a typical feature of folklore. As discussed in Chapter 2.1, there is no authoritative version of a story – in contrast to the case with literature – rather all versions are equally correct. Due to the fact that oral storytellers often alter and adapt the story to a particular audience or to a specific situation,[135] there can be a significant degree of variation in the variants preserved in ancient literature. The urban legends concerning octopuses leaving their natural habitat, driven by laziness and gluttony discussed in Chapters 10.1 & 10.2, are a case in point, demonstrating how the same basic story (a legend type) can exist in different versions.

The second criterion of identification of oral traditions, allusions to tales by giving their traditional name, is somewhat more complicated, given the fact that we lack the actual narrative. Sometimes the oral narrative alluded to is preserved in one or several other authors' works. An example of this is found in the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius' (reigned AD 161–180) *Meditations*: "Don't forget the story of the town mouse and the country mouse, and the latter's fear (*ptoian*, literally "fluttering") and trepidation (*diasobêsin*)".[136] As mentioned in Chapter 2.2, Horace reiterates this fable in its entirety, presenting it as an old wives' tale told by his rustic neighbour Cervius.[137]

In other cases, the author alludes to a story unknown to us as it has not been preserved, but there are references to supernatural creatures known from other stories which are likely to have been of oral origin. We find an example of this in the Greek playwright Aristophanes' (460/50 – before 386 BC) *Wasps*: "… how Lamia broke wind when caught",[138] and in Horace we find the following allusion: "… nor from Lamia's sated belly draw out a living child".[139] Neither of these stories are known; what we do know is that children were told tales about this fearful supernatural creature (see Chapter 5.2), and there clearly existed a wide variety of these stories in antiquity.[140] We also have a number of longer narratives of Lamia incorporated in literary texts,[141] and there is much to suggest that these stories were spread in both literary and oral variants.

There are also allusions to names of traditional stories which we can only assume were oral, as these stories remain otherwise unknown: for instance, Aristophanes' reference to the story about "a mouse and a cat", for this begins with the words "once upon a time" (*houtô pot*', the third criterion, discussed below). No fable of this specific type has survived in ancient literature, but there may well have been one in oral circulation. Or when Echion, one of the characters in Petronius' novel *Satyrica*, passes hints on a *Schlaraffenland*-type of tale (i.e., about an imaginary land of plenty) with pigs walking about already cooked: "'Sometimes it's this way, sometimes it's that way,' the rustic said when he lost his pied pig".[142] The audience was familiar with much of the oral traditions, thus there was simply no need to reiterate the story in its entirety to make a specific point. As discussed in Chapter 2.1, this phenomenon, traditional referentiality, is a typical feature of oral narrative, although it has been transferred to a literary context.

The third criterion of identification of oral traditions consists of introductory formulas closely resembling those known from living oral tradition,[143] such as Horace's words before telling the tale of *The City Mouse and the Country Mouse*: "Once upon a time" (*Olim*).[144] A few of these introductory formulas have survived in ancient literature, suggesting an oral

origin of the stories told or alluded to.[145] Other phrases resemble those used by traditional storytellers: "For I too will tell you of a horrible event" (*Rem horribilem narrabo*).[146]

The fourth criterion indicating use of oral traditions in a literary work is the description of storytelling contexts presented prior to telling a tale. Storytelling contexts have been discussed in some detail above (Chapter 2.2), and it is clear that beginning by describing a storytelling context and then inserting a story of oral origin was a literary device to create a feeling familiar to many readers: that of listening to stories. William Hansen has argued that authenticity – although he does not use this specific term, but rather writes of the authors' mimicking an oral performance – was important in this context. In painting this picture of a storytelling context, the primary narrator (i.e., the author) has to depict a credible storytelling context. The secondary narrator (i.e., the storyteller) has to be portrayed as a character who believably could narrate a story of the specific kind, the circumstances which might prompt him/her to tell the story must be plausible, and equally so must the likely response of the audience be.[147]

The fifth criterion of identification of oral traditions is when the author specifies that this is a story that he has heard rather than read. An example of this is found in Pliny the Younger's *Letters*; in one of these, he asks Lucius Licinius Sura of his opinion regarding the existence of ghosts, and tells two stories about apparitions and ghosts he has heard. The first story deals with how the future governor of Africa had a vision of a giant woman, the spirit of Africa, letting him know that he would one day become governor. Pliny makes it clear that he heard the story: "… from what I heard happened (*quod audio accidisse*) to Curtius Rufus". Equally, the subsequent story – about a haunted house in Athens (see Chapter 9.3) – begins with the words: "Isn't what I will now relate just as I heard it *(quod exponam ut accepi*) both more terrible and no less wonderful [than the previous story]?"[148]

Our sixth category of oral traditions found in ancient literature is in historical or antiquarian works where it is either known, or we have strong reasons to suspect, that the author actively collected orally transmitted history and other narratives. Herodotus' *Histories* is a well-known example of this, and as aforesaid this fact was commented upon already in antiquity. As mentioned above, Pausanias actively collected orally transmitted history, history that either contradicted or complemented written history, as he travelled around.[149]

Finally, the last criterion for identifying oral traditions is that collections of fables, jokes, anecdotes and proverbs originally were oral.[150]

As already touched upon, it is often the case that a specific story in ancient literature – what is denominated a type in folklore studies – can often be identified as of oral origin through a number of the abovementioned criteria. A straightforward example is *The Widow of Ephesus* discussed in some detail in Chapter 2.2, which is found in two more or less contemporary literary works, and which can be identified as oral through three of the abovementioned criteria. On the one hand, the story is found in Phaedrus' (*c.* 15 BC–*c.* AD 50) *Fables*, that is, a Latin collection of fables, in the form of a novella.[151] On the other hand, it is found in the form of a quasi-legend in Petronius' *Satyrica*.[152]

Most scholars have argued that the two authors drew upon the same literary source – such as the now lost work of Hellenistic date, Aristides' *Milesian tales* – or that Phaedrus got the tale from Petronius.[153] But as forcefully argued by William Hansen: "[s]cholarly speculation has focused on literary sources for no apparent reason other than that the scholars are philologists, for it certainly is just as possible that one or both of the authors drew upon an oral tale".[154]

Firstly, and most importantly, the two related ancient versions of this story strongly resemble an international oral taletype: Aarne-Thompson-Uther type 1510.[155] In fact, the text itself contains a possible comment on the story being a folktale, for it is said that the widow was widely known as a paragon of virtue, and the story (*fabula*) of her chastity spread through local society.[156] Secondly, in the *Satyrica*, the author has given a description of a storytelling context – a man telling a crude story of women's fickleness to a number of passengers and the crew aboard a ship – which strengthens the argument that it was oral. Thirdly, the fact that it was included in a collection of fables may suggest an oral origin of the tale.

The narratives that form the basis of the present study can all be identified as belonging to the oral tradition through the criteria discussed above, in many cases this has been done in earlier scholarly studies, a body of evidence to which we have added a number of narratives not previously identified as such.

Coping with Emotions

3 The Study of Emotion and Fear

In this chapter, we present research on emotion as it has influenced our own analysis of the verbalisation of emotion in narrative. We begin with a general account of the study of emotion, and then proceed with a discussion of research on fear in particular. In the general account, the examples we cite to illustrate various points are chiefly drawn from the ancient world in order to show how these perspectives can be applied to an ancient material. In this case, as in the rest of the book, we are indebted to the many excellent studies on emotion in antiquity that have appeared in recent years.[1]

As readers will note, the majority of examples derive from the ancient philosophers. This is partly due to the current state of research, with a preponderance of studies on ancient philosophies of emotion, and partly to the nature of the ancient sources themselves, usually written by male members of the elite with philosophical interests; our present insights into popular conceptions of emotion are rather limited. Notwithstanding, some ancient philosophical theories of emotion are closer to popular psychology than others, and it is to these that we primarily refer in this chapter. Aristotle's theory of emotion, for instance, is often believed to have sprung from the conventional psychology of his time, and even though it reflects Greek conditions, there are significant parallels in Roman vernacular psychology.[2] This warrants paying his theory particular attention here.

3.1 The Study of Emotion

The study of emotion has recently attracted increasing attention, with a boom from the late 1980s onward. Representatives of a wide variety of disciplines – ranging from history, ancient history, anthropology and ethnology to philosophy, psychology and neurobiology – have made contributions to this burgeoning field. They have examined emotions from many different perspectives, sometimes yielding conflicting results. Generally, research on emotion can be said to fall into roughly four categories:

- the universalist,
- the constructionist,
- the cognitivist,
- the mediating approach.

The first of these approaches, the universalist, is principally advocated by neurobiologists and psychologists. The argument is that emotion is basically a physiological and individual thing, and because of this rootedness in our biology, emotion is universal: regardless of which culture we belong to, we recognise the same emotions, or at least a number of "basic" ones, and we recognise them even in members of cultures very remote from our own, since they are expressed through the same facial expressions. In other words, there is a human biology and psychology common to us all, and any cultural rules for the display of emotion form a rather superficial veneer.[3]

Constructionists have often criticised the assumptions and results of the universalists by appealing to their own experiences in anthropological fieldwork and sociological inquiries. The emotions recognised in other cultures can be very difficult to interpret: they might be identified in ways that differ from our own; the boundaries between different emotions can be drawn differently; they might compound what we consider several emotions into one, etc. Thus, proponents argue that emotions are culturally constructed, and that the emotions of each culture must be analysed on their own terms.[4]

Scholars favouring the third approach, the cognitivist – this especially concerns philosophers – stress the cognitive and evaluative aspects of emotion. They claim that reason and emotion are complementary. We do not use our reason to interpret the world around us; without taking stock of our emotions, the world would remain incomprehensible. Emotions also help us in pinpointing the social values we cherish most, because our deepest emotions are often stirred by threats to what we hold dear. Sometimes the cognitivist account implies the exclusion of any essentially "affective" or physiological component.[5]

The fourth current, the mediating approach, has grown out of an attempt within anthropology and history to reconcile the universalist and constructionist approaches by marrying attentiveness to the physiological sensations people experience in their bodies, "feelings", with an awareness of the cultural verbalisation and interpretation of these feelings, "emotion".[6] In this book, we have tried to give attention to both, to the extent our sources allow.

We have also tried to learn from all four approaches, as they all have something to teach us. The most important lesson is afforded by the constructionists: the emotions of the ancient Romans must be interpreted on their own terms.[7] In order to do this, we must be aware of our own cultural conceptions of emotion, since we cannot escape our own frames of reference. Scholars have likened the comparison of our own cultural notions of emotion with those of other cultures to translation: we can use our understanding of the

way we perceive emotion to make the emotions of another culture intelligible to us. In Western culture, for example, we tend to view emotions as the opposite of reason, at least in popular psychology. Emotions are wild, irrational, uncontrollable and involuntary (we are "seized" by emotions). They leave us vulnerable and can turn us into a danger to others (we are "overwhelmed" by emotions). They are intensely physical, "natural" rather than "cultural", and private and subjective. Finally, women are more "emotional" than men.[8] To some extent, these same elements are also to be found in ancient views on emotion, but there are important differences as well, as we will see.

The concept of translation is important in another respect as well: in transferring the words of another language to our own, we must be aware of the differences in what they actually refer to. So-called emotion words (words designating emotion) tend to be applied to specific situations in which people interact, or are expected to interact, in particular ways, and they embody a specific moral perspective on these situations and interactions. The personal goals of individuals, or socially defined goals, also affect the application of these emotion words.[9] In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, for instance, the situations in which a man becomes angry with someone – due to an improper slight to himself, his friends or his family – are listed, and many of these involve the danger of losing social status, being lowered in the esteem of superiors and peers, and losing respect in the eyes of inferiors.[10] This anger (*orgê*) is depicted as entirely justified, since the slight is described as "not fitting", implying a moral judgement of the situation, of the man and of the actions of the offender.

The relations between emotion words can also be different. The emotion Aristotle proffered as the opposite of anger was *praotês*, which is usually translated as mildness or calm, though it has recently been proposed that we should render it as satisfaction.[11] Aristotle explains it as the calming and appeasing of anger, but in the modern West it is not enough to define an emotion simply as the absence of another. Nevertheless, Aristotle states that *praotês* is the emotion people experience in the absence of all those slights that usually make men angry, or when the slights are – or seem to be – unintended. Furthermore, people that are feared, pitied or considered sufficiently punished by their misfortunes also evoke this emotion. The individual himself experiences this emotion in the face of what might be perceived as a slight if he thinks himself justly chastised for some transgression of his own. This does not mean that Aristotle's angry men never felt compassion, in contrast to those consumed by hate. Perhaps more surprising to us, Aristotle related anger to confidence, saying that "anger inspires confidence" if we are on such good terms with the gods that we can expect them to avenge the wrongs we have suffered.[12]

Sometimes we have no emotion corresponding to an ancient one. This is the case with positive rivalry or emulation (*zêlos*), which Aristotle describes as pain at another's possession of highly valued goods, not because the other possesses it, but because oneself does not. He meticulously distinguishes it from brute envy, which he views as fundamentally base and malicious, whereas emulation is the mark of the virtuous man. For in order to be emulous, one must regard oneself as worthy of these honours and goods, and be so regarded by others. Conversely, the persons people wish to emulate are equally worthy of this honour: they are individuals in positions of authority, such as generals or orators, persons famed for their courage and wisdom, people that are admired by many, and persons many want as their friend.[13]

In all these cases, we recognise yet another lesson from the constructionists: emotions are closely tied to cultural notions of the self.[14] Aristotle's angry man is active and self-sufficient, always ready to defend his position in the social hierarchy. Women are mentioned only insofar as they belong to the dependents he is morally obliged to protect.[15] The image of the angry man conforms to the traditional gender roles of ancient Greek society, and to the kind of behaviour expected of a member of the elite. So does the emulous man, who wishes to gain the goods and honours appropriate to his station: no-one strives for what he cannot possibly obtain. This emphasis on activity is even present in Aristotle's account of fear (*phobos*), which he – in contrast to our own conceptions of fear as a passivising and debilitating emotion – says "make men deliberate" in hope of escaping the danger. Conversely, those who have given up hope, no longer feel any fear.[16]

The cognitivists have helped to spotlight the pronounced cognitive component in many ancient definitions of emotion, ranging from Aristotle's rather moderate understanding of emotion as that which induces people to "differ and change in regard to their judgements",[17] to the more extreme view of the Stoics that emotion *is* judgement, and a false one at that.[18] However, others have criticised the tendency to disregard the affectivity of emotion, arguing that there is a certain qualitative difference between cognition and emotion after all, even though emotion is still construed as a way of "thinking of" something.

The difference between cognition and emotion is said to lie in the emotional engagement of the individual, i.e. in a deep personal involvement with the issues at stake.[19] The idea that emotions are "embodied thoughts, thoughts seeped with the apprehension that 'I am involved'" suggested by Michelle Rosaldo,[20] seems an appropriate one in this context. This kind of personal involvement can also entail a sense of moral obligation to experience the right emotion at the right time, as Aristotle reminds us in the *Nicomachean*

Ethics: there he condemns the overly placid man for failing to be angered by things he *ought* to be enraged by.[21]

From the fourth approach, we have learned that the verbalisation of feeling and emotion is a delicate process that can actually change our experience of them: thus, the narration of fear can transform the experience of fear.[22] This is of course most obvious in the narration of personal experiences: the act of naming an emotion, such as fear, causes us to reflect on whether this really is the emotion we are experiencing, or whether it would be better described as some other emotion instead, such as anger. This may lead us to qualify or change our interpretation of our emotion. Conversely, if we conclude that we have named our emotion correctly, this will affect how we choose to act and think – fearfully or angrily? – and we will probably give our identification of the emotion no further thought. Finally, the verbalisation of an emotion can either intensify it or make it dissipate; if we are angry, expressing it can make us even more enraged, or induce us to calm down.[23] However, the narration of other people's emotions in fictional narratives, such as the ones we study, can also have some of these qualities due to the strong emotional presence that tends to characterise them.[24]

3.2 The Study of Fear

Fear occupies an interesting position in the study of emotion. It is often regarded as more primal and instinctive than many other emotions: it is cast as part of our evolutionary baggage, a trigger to the survival of the species.[25] As such, the influence of the universalist trend in the study of emotion is strong in the case of fear: if fear is part of our biological makeup, it is also universal and fairly conform across cultures. Fear has been regarded as one of the basic human emotions, with a distinctive physiology: accelerated heart rate, increased skin conductance, and decreased finger temperature, all responses which would contribute to effective flight.[26] Concomitantly, it can be perceived as the result of largely unconscious processes in the brain, with the conscious feeling of fear being just the tip of the iceberg.[27] Despite this emphasis on the adaptive role of fear, however, its primary function can still be construed as fundamentally social, as a means to "mobilize the mechanism to deal quickly with important interpersonal encounters".[28]

Constructionists do not necessarily deny the justification of the evolutionary account of fear, but prefer to stress the symbolic and communicative aspects of fear to a much larger extent; the uses to which we put fear socially tend to go far beyond the requirements of the mere survival

of the species.[29] Many of the fears humans experience are not of the type literally involving our physical survival, even though discussions of fear in neurobiology and psychology often focus on this kind of fear.[30]

This means that a significant proportion of our fears serve social ends, typically to exercise social control. On this view, fear keeps members of society in line, inducing them to avoid the retribution of their peers, and conversely, the fear of the erring individual alerts him or her to the imminent risk of incurring society's resentment. Fear is no longer an internal state unique to the individual, but just as social an emotion as shame or guilt, which are generally regarded as quintessentially social or moral in character. To state it differently, "[f]ear is our society speaking to us through our own voice":[31] the fear we might perceive as personal is in fact socially created, but it is so much a part of us that we do not normally notice this social derivation.

The wider implication of it all is that fear, despite its hard-wired appearances, is also eminently political, in several senses of the word. This is especially evident in today's world, where the "culture of fear" is said to reign supreme: it has been represented as dominating public life in the Western world, and as an emotion we tend to perceive as independent of any particular object; instead of fearing particular things, such as death or hunger as people did before, we now allegedly fear the very act of fearing.[32]

The political utility of fear in the conventional sense – making people more prone to accept being governed by princes and politicians – has been emphasised at least since the Renaissance.[33] There is also a discourse of "beneficial fear" in modern society, which depicts fear as a route to a heightened state of experience, to the strengthening of social cohesion, and the proper appreciation of particular political values; without this fear, it is intimated, we would fail to recognise these values, and be emotionally numbed.[34] The fear of fearing deplored in the culture of fear is here cherished as a boost in the intensity of experience.

Fear is political in another sense too, as we use it to negotiate social relations and hierarchies in everyday encounters.[35] As an extension of the principle that fear is not primarily an internal state – and therefore does not exclusively reside inside the individual – but is also socially produced, it has been suggested that fear is chiefly relational: it binds the person experiencing the fear together with the object of that fear.[36] Yet fear is not seen as an effect of a linear stimulus–response model, moving from an initial experience, its interpretation and evaluation to a feeling, its expression as an emotion and finally into action.[37] Rather, fear arises in the circulation of emotion, as an effect of the distinction being made between the one under threat and that

which threatens; "fear works by establishing others as fearsome" insofar as they threaten to take the self in.[38]

Moreover, fear, though not generally recognised as a moral emotion per se,[39] is far from unrelated to morality and moral judgements. To take a few examples, in the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries, the stout courage of the fearless knight was often contrasted with the cowardice of the tremulous populace, to the detriment of the latter; with the French Revolution, this state of affairs was not substantially changed, as the populace and the nobles merely switched places, the former becoming the courageous and the latter the timorous ones.[40] The relation between fear and cowardice remained constant, as well as the evaluation of fear as morally inferior.

Jumping ahead a few centuries, during the Second World War, the most deep-seated fear of both privates and officers in the British armed forces was supposedly the fear of showing fear, rather than the fear of actually being killed in action. On the civilian side, the stiff upper lip of Britons in the face of bombardment was compared favourably to the excessive fear of certain social groups: women, working-class women and men, and ex-servicemen were singled out as more fearful than others.[41] Separating the courageous from the cowardly was part of the maintenance of established social hierarchies.

On a different note, in the 1940s and 1950s, cancer emerged as the most feared disease in the West. This fear was exacerbated by the moral judgements passed on sufferers, as the contraction of cancer was attributed to the moral failings of individuals: they were thought to get their just deserts. Not surprisingly, people therefore avoided seeing a physician, even when the presence of symptoms of cancer should have been obvious. The parallel to the fear of AIDS in the 1980s in this respect is striking, though the stigmatisation of victims of the disease functioned somewhat differently; it was not psychologised, as was the case with cancer, but was more directly linked to what was perceived as sexual deviancy.[42]

Consequently, the fears prevalent in a society vary: some fears we might think of as universal, such as the fear of death, are not necessarily so – many have faced death without horror, believing in a higher purpose or a reward in the afterlife.[43] Some fears have replaced others, just as the fear of supernatural encounters in nineteenth-century Sweden was replaced by the modern fear of environmental pollution, war and random street violence.[44]

Certain anxieties that were once a great preoccupation, such as the "problem" of shyness in early twentieth-century England, have since lost their charge; somewhat surprisingly, at the time men rather than women were regarded as more inclined to timidity, which was allegedly precipitated by the new-found emotional stability of women. Conversely, the corresponding

shyness of women was instead explained as a result of their high-heeled shoes and tight lacing;[45] as is evident from this example, the rationale behind cultural conceptions of this sort is not always entirely logical. Similarly, the fear of magical assaults on fertility and sexual potency rife in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France reached such proportions that many people avoided marrying in church and even had their marriage rites performed at night, which was otherwise quite unheard of.

The fears of different social groups might also vary: as Jean Delumeau has attempted to show for medieval and early modern Europe, the visceral fears of the populace – centering on fear of the sea, of the dark, demons, famine, disease, neighbours and strangers – were different from the fears of the elite, which tended to be focused on the enemies of the Church, such as Jews, Muslims, and heretics, the last being an overarching concept assimilating all the rest.[46] Furthermore, it has been proposed that some cultures at specific points in time are more fearful than others, for example people in the Western world in the late middle ages and early modern period,[47] or in the present-day West.[48] We intend to make no such claims for the Roman period based on our sources; the kind of material on which our study rests does not allow for drawing such far-reaching conclusions. Nevertheless, we do believe the fears we examine were prevalent, as the threats with which they were concerned were perceived to undermine some of the cornerstones of Roman society: the family and the urban way of life.

Within the fields of ancient history and classics, research on fear has tended to focus on a number of issues, mainly terminology, political fear, and the literary representation of fear; these concerns are by no means mutually exclusive. We can see this clearly in the production of Jacqueline de Romilly, who wrote two early studies on fear in the writings of Thucydides[49] and Aeschylus.[50] Beginning with the latter, which is the more sustained account, de Romilly pointed to the ways in which the emotion of fear and its cognates permeate the oeuvre of the tragic playwright Aeschylus (525?–456/455 BC), often explicitly as he employs a wealth of emotion words designating these emotions, but also implicitly, when fear seems to be lurking behind other emotions, blending into them and eventually taking them over.[51] In a somewhat similar manner, we will argue that fear is sometimes covertly present in the stories we study, even if it is not expressly named. Like de Romilly, we are also more interested in the hows of fear, rather than the whys and whats, in the sense that the process of verbalisation of fear is the chief object of our analysis, with incentives to fear and the objects of fear being necessary corollaries to that inquiry.

De Romilly examined the language and metaphorics of fear, paying particular attention to the roles of the liver and the heart in the representation

of this emotion in Aeschylus, and elucidated the effects of fear on these organs, and on the human being as a whole. She noted that the liver is depicted as a passive element against which fear is raging, whereas the heart is active, to such a point that the acts of the heart and the acts of fear start to coincide; both are represented as agents in themselves.[52]

Turning to the meanings of fear in Aeschylus, de Romilly situated the descriptions of fear in his tragedies within the context of a moral and religious universe. She argued that in his works, fear is depicted as very physical; it occurs spontaneously and irrepressibly, and is essentially sent from the outside, by a deity that is often angry or vengeful. At the same time, fear is experienced within the person, and is thus interiorised. According to de Romilly, in Aeschylus we are witnessing the transition from an archaic world view, present in Homer, in which the interference of the gods was habitual and normal, to one in which such interference was out of the ordinary and required an explanation. This explanation was to be found within the individual, and the search for it engendered doubt and uncertainty. Attempting to reconcile the notion of a divinely governed world on the one hand, and the idea of man as judge of his own actions on the other, fear was transformed into anxiety.[53]

The conclusion drawn is that human suffering is represented as a route to wisdom, and that there is a perceived difference between good fear and bad fear. Good fear prods people to respectable conduct, while bad fear is primarily associated with unworthy rulers, who inspire fear without respect. Thus, there is a clear civic dimension to the utility of fear. It was a train of thought adopted by later authors, such as Plato and Sophocles, not to mention Thucydides.[54]

The role of fear in Thucydides' *History of the War Between Athens and Sparta* is still a flourishing field of research; in de Romilly's rendition, there is a fairly sharp distinction between rational fear (*deos*) and irrational fear (*phobos*) in Thucydides. *Deos* would largely pertain to the future, whereas *phobos* would focus on the immediate present. Hence, *deos* would, by implication, be the good form of fear, as *deos* was seen as the fundament on which the greatness of Athens rested. Yet this good fear was not the sole preserve of the city state of Athens: according to de Romilly, it pervaded all Greek states; it served to uphold a precarious political equilibrium between them.[55]

More recent research on this topic has further emphasised the foundational importance of fear in Thucydides' political analysis: William Desmond has stressed that it was fear – rather than the love, need, shared history or ideals prominent in contemporaneous rival theories – that was seen to propel the initial formation of states and communities in ancient times, and within the state it fostered fearlessness, while it was externally divisive,

severing individual communities from each other and hampering their relations. Notwithstanding, total fearlessness was far from desirable; according to Desmond, fear of outside enemies should be sublimated into fear of civil law, keeping individual citizens in check within the state, whereas relations with other states should be handled with prudence and self-doubt.[56] Thus, fear could have a positive role to play in politics.

In his study of the function of fear in internal state politics as described by Thucydides, Brian E. Calabrese challenges Desmond's assumption that Thucydides would champion such a normative argument in favour of fear. Internally, fear can skew or obstruct democratic processes, and is as such destructive in nature. Calabrese argues that Thucydides regarded fear as out of place in a democracy, and that a democratic regime was, despite the imperfections of the knowledge on which democratic decisions were made, the type of regime best suited to tackling the influence of fear on civic society. Concerning Thucydides' terminology of fear, suspicion (*hupopsis*) is established as a distinct form of fear that is usually left out of account. Methodologically, Calabrese examines the subject and source of a threat, the distance of the threat, and the reality, credibility, and gravity of the threat.[57] Though our focus is somewhat different, leaving out the reality, credibility and gravity of the threat, the subject and perceived source of the threat is also important to our own inquiry, as well as the seeming distance of the threat.

As for surveys of terminology, L. A. MacKay conducted an analysis of the vocabulary of fear in Latin epic poetry (Virgil, Lucan, Statius and Ovid) in 1961, counting the occurrence of twelve different word groups for fear in a representative work by each poet. Apart from revealing individual preferences in word choice, and sometimes nuances of meaning that varied over time, the significantly higher proportion of fear words in the later poets (Lucan and Statius) was tentatively interpreted as related to a change in the temper of the time, or possibly in the rhetorical elaboration of such aspects.[58]

Even though studies of the literary representation of emotion have multiplied recently, they are generally centered on other emotions than fear, such as anger,[59] grief[60] or hatred.[61] An important exception is the discussion by David S. Levene of the literary representation of fear in the Roman historian Tacitus' (*c.* AD 55–*c.* 120) account of the fall of the Emperor Vitellius. Levene argues that Tacitus skillfully manipulates point of view in his narrative to arouse fear and pity for the plight of the emperor. Vitellius would not be an obvious object of pity for Tacitus' readers; his own excessive and misdirected fears, described in detail by Tacitus, led him to make some very poor decisions, and his character was far from blameless. When Tacitus describes these traits, he

opts for an "analytic" treatment of fear: he explains and evaluates it morally,[62] which creates an emotional distance between character and reader.

Notwithstanding, Tacitus also endeavours to arouse pity for Vitellius' downfall, principally by showing other characters in the story pitying him. By encouraging his readers to identify with this internal audience, which is presented as reliable in its judgement, they are encouraged to take on the same emotion. Such an "audience-based" viewpoint clashes with the critical, analytic point of view adopted earlier. At first, this pity is conditioned by a general sense of the pitiability of a great man's fall from power, but, eventually, pity for Vitellius as a person is evoked. This is done in two ways: firstly, through an appeal to the predicament of his family, whose imminent dire fate Vitellius himself pities, and secondly, by undermining the coldly moralising viewpoint of the internal audience at his demise; through its previous indulgence in senseless destruction, the internal audience is itself cast as morally dubious and not to be trusted.[63]

Levene connects Tacitus' narrative strategy of playing off analytic and audience-based viewpoints to Aristotle's theory of the tragic emotions, discussed in Chapter 4.1. Even though he does not posit any direct influence on the Roman historians, since Aristotle's works were quite unfamiliar to the Romans in Tacitus' day, he suggests that these views were shared as part of a general cultural complex.[64] This is the kind of argument we will be advancing with regards to our own material.

4 Philosophical Perspectives on Emotion, Fear and Therapy

In this chapter, we cover ancient philosophies of the emotions, with a particular focus on fear, as well as ancient therapies of the emotions. Since we intend to compare the emotions verbalised in the narratives we study with ancient philosophical perspectives – to see to what extent they overlap, what constitutes common ground, and in what respects they differ from each other – this review will be important for the subsequent discussion in the analytical chapters.

We have chosen to employ the extant philosophical material for several reasons. Firstly, it is an especially rich comparative material, as it articulates the nuances of ancient Greek and Roman emotion words. Secondly, in many cases, it seems evident to us that the ancient philosophers often engage (polemically) with popular conceptions of emotion, making philosophy a valuable tool in uncovering these popular notions. In other words, philosophy suggests ways of reading the folk narratives that might otherwise be overlooked, or not be understood in their full import. It is a method of reading that is essentially intertextual, as it presumes the existence of shared, though perhaps contested, meanings concerning the place of emotions in human life.

Some aspects of the philosophical discussions are of more direct relevance to us than others, and some influential accounts of emotion have therefore been left out of consideration. This especially pertains to Plato (*c*. 429–347 BC), whose impact on the Western understanding of emotions to this day can scarcely be overemphasized, with his insistent stress on the irrationality of emotion.[1] However, since the attitude Plato exhibited to emotion is not very present in the stories we study, we will not discuss Platonic philosophy *per se* here.

As for those ancient philosophies we do discuss, we have chosen to include such points that make it possible to sketch a broader cultural context against which the stories might be read. For example, while the Stoic insistence on the necessity to extirpate all emotions – or radically transmute them – is likely to have remained the concern of an educated elite,[2] other philosophical doctrines may have resonated with the aspirations of ordinary people, such as the idea of moderating strong emotions as recommended by the Peripatetics, the followers of Aristotle (384–322 BC).[3] From a purely popular perspective, an account of Stoic philosophy would then be superfluous.

Yet since the stories can be read on at least two levels – as part of ancient Roman traditions of popular storytelling on the one hand and of the ancient literary tradition on the other – things are not that simple. As we intend to keep this twin focus in mind throughout the analysis and not privilege one over the other, both popular and elite perspectives ought to be included; the texts we now possess are products of this double derivation, and to understand them we must give heed to both. This confers some complexity on the analytical work. For instance, we find it is feasible to assume that the relation between orally circulated narratives and philosophy on the one hand, and literary renditions of these narratives and philosophy on the other, was different. It is quite unlikely that oral storytellers were actually influenced by high-brow discussions within philosophy to any notable extent, whereas more or less overt references to ancient philosophy were conceivably more prominent in the literary realm.

Thus, when the oral story entered a literary context, it might have assumed new features and connected to new domains of meaning, such as philosophy. This is probably the case with Pliny the Younger's ghost story examined in Chapter 9, in which the ideal of the Stoic sage looms large in the telling of the story, in a way it might not have done in oral variants. That much said, this does not exclude the possibility that the oral story might have appealed to popular conceptions of philosophers in some way; even people who knew nothing of philosophy might well know what philosophers were supposed to be like.[4]

In the subsequent discussion, we focus exclusively on philosophical treatments of emotion, leaving the comparison of philosophical tenets and the narratives studied to the analysis carried out in the individual chapters. We begin with a description of what emotion was held to be. Then we move on to the role of emotion in human life and how it was believed to affect the individual's character; this aspect connects philosophies of emotion to existing cultural norms and values, especially in terms of age and gender. Finally, we examine definitions of individual emotions, principally fear, and how fear was linked to other emotions, if this issue was addressed.

In our analysis of the verbalisation of emotion in the narratives, we compare the information gathered from this discussion with what can be gleaned from the stories themselves, which are seldom particularly verbose on this subject. Philosophical views on the nature of fear and its relation to other emotions furnish our point of departure in studying the verbalisation of fear in the narratives, as well as in analysing the conceptual links forged between fear and other emotions. Especially Aristotle's treatment of emotions that exclude

one another – such as anger and fear, and fear and love – have been helpful in examining the stories.

Philosophical ideas about the role of emotion in human life and its influence on the individual's character are included as they pave the way for the discussion on therapy. The issue of the desirability (or undesirability) of emotions, and the distinction that was generally made between fleeting emotions on the one hand and more enduring mental dispositions on the other, were seen to affect the necessity, ease and efficacy of any therapy of these emotions. Thus, these ideas bear directly on the therapeutic argument of this book, which mixes elements from ancient and modern therapies, as mentioned in Chapter 1.

As we will argue in this chapter, the cognitive emphasis of many ancient philosophies of the emotions entails that most ancient therapies relied on processing difficulties and problems verbally, through reflection. For us in the modern Western world, who are inured to the basic precepts of the talking cure, this stress is distinctly familiar. In a study of the therapeutic effects of storytelling, it is of course a necessary prerequisite to at least entertain the idea that the verbal expression of emotions might have this beneficial outcome.

In this chapter, we describe three major therapies of the emotions associated with the schools we deal with: Aristotle's notion of the catharsis of emotions, more specifically of pity and fear in a certain genre of literature, tragedy; Epicurean therapeutic techniques, especially the methods of diverting attention from present ills to past pleasures, and censure or moral portraiture; and finally, Stoic techniques such as the pre-rehearsal of future ills and consolation through stories.

These therapies differ on one crucial point: Aristotle's focus is on tragedy's emotional effect on the *audience* – thus his is a theory of reception – while the Epicurean and Stoic techniques primarily concern the *teller*, with the exception of consolation through stories, which is a cure administered by others to the ailing person, who constitutes an audience. In this context, we wish to stress that the "teller" in our analysis can be both the historical author in whose work the originally oral story has been preserved, and a reconstructed, generalised oral storyteller, since no real oral storytellers of the period can be studied.

This selection of therapies partly reflects the availability of sources on this topic (we have covered many of the most important ones), and partly it matches the therapeutic strategies we discover in the stories. However, since a relatively limited number of passages are directly concerned with the therapy of fear, our account of these therapies must also rely on the therapy of other emotions. To some extent, therapies are emotion-specific; this is certainly true

of the rational arguments offered against individual emotions, which naturally focus on the drawbacks of submitting to these precise emotions. Still, the technique itself, for instance of using rational argument to disclose the "ugly face" of such-and-such an emotion, can often be generalised.

We have restricted ourselves to ancient therapies here, both because they are usually primary in relation to modern ones in our elaboration of the therapeutic functions of the stories and hence merit proportionately more attention, and because the chapter would otherwise turn unwieldy. Just as we have favoured no one approach in the case of ancient therapies, the same holds true for modern ones. Accordingly, modern therapies are introduced and discussed in those contexts in which they are actually being used.

4.1 Aristotle: The Usefulness of Emotion and Arousing Pity and Fear Through Plot

Aristotelian views on fear – and the related topic of courage – will be important in this book, as Aristotle was the first to clearly define the nature of fear in a fashion that still feels familiar to us today. While his teacher Plato was generally more suspicious of the emotions and gave them a more circumscribed role in the life of the individual, Aristotle regarded them as crucial in the formation of the individual.[5] As mentioned in Chapter 3.1, Aristotle defined the emotions as those things which cause people to differ and change in regard to their judgements, and, following Plato, they are accompanied by pleasure and pain, often both at the same time.[6]

The most salient feature of Aristotle's descriptions of the emotions in the *Rhetoric* – the first sustained account of the emotions in Greek philosophy – is nevertheless their pronounced role in social life.[7] Emotions are typically said to arise in social situations, and respond to occasions when the individual's social position is in jeopardy, or others are thought to receive undue benefits. Almost all emotions are associated with a judgement concerning someone's moral worth, social eligibility or strength in terms of power, wealth or influential friends.

Just to give an example, pity (*eleos*) is pain at the undeserved misfortune suffered by someone who resembles us, the implication being that the same could happen to us,[8] and fear (*phobos*) is primarily linked to threats from our social superiors.[9] There is a symmetry between pity and fear that make them instrumental in Aristotle's theory of the therapeutic effects of tragedy (see below), which we exploit in our discussion of therapy in Chapter 7.

Fear is understood as "some pain (*lupê*) or trouble (*tarakhê*) [springing] from the impression of a threatening evil that is destructive or painful".[10] Evils that do not involve pain, such as becoming unjust or slow-minded, and ones that are remote, such as death (if the prospect of dying is not imminent), do not evoke fear. Highly destructive evils are not only frightening in themselves, however; even the signs that presage their coming create fear, since they indicate the approach of evil:

> If this then is fear, by necessity such things are fearful that appear to possess great power to destroy or inflict painful harm. Therefore, even the signs of such fearful things are fearful, as the fearful thing seems near at hand. Consequently, this constitutes danger (*kindunos*), the approach of the fearful.[11]

This aspect of fear is exploited to great effect in the stories discussed in Chapter 9. The approaching dangers listed by Aristotle are virtually all the result of the evil intent of human agents; Aristotle contends that most people are bad rather than good, and that they transgress whenever they get the opportunity. Consequently, it is prudent to fear those showing enmity and anger and that are in a position to inflict harm on us, for they are probably poised to strike. Actually, anyone in a position to do us harm, whether stronger than ourselves or stronger than our superiors – and thus all the more able to dispose of us – should be feared; this opinion clearly reflects the society in which Aristotle lived, which was characterised by extreme competitiveness, at least among the elite.[12]

Fear is also an appropriate response to situations in which the individual has committed a serious error that is impossible to redress, and when the likelihood of assistance is remote. As a rule of thumb, all those things that excite pity when they befall another create fear when they happen to oneself or very close intimates.[13] Notwithstanding, in order to experience fear in these appropriate circumstances, it is necessary to entertain some hope of deliverance from the danger. "For", Aristotle says, "fear makes men deliberate" (*ho de gar phobos bouleutikous poiei*),[14] and nobody deliberates about what is considered to be hopeless.

People can be fearless for other reasons as well: those who do not expect to suffer misfortune at the hands of others are not frightened. Such fearlessness does not spring from true courage, and in this respect, it resembles the fearlessness inspired by anger, a sanguine temperament and ignorance, none of which can be classified as true courage, which is the ability to endure terrible things even while recognising them as such. This notion of courage will be relevant for the analysis in Chapter 10. This kind of courage is the more commendable in unanticipated danger, since it is a more genuine show of

character than bravery in the face of a foreseen danger, which can be the result of a reasoned decision to stand fast.[15] Ignorance is regarded as an instance of insensitivity to frightening things, along with the better-grounded fearlessness induced by prior experience of the danger, for instance storms at sea; this is one of the few examples in Aristotle's account of what we would call natural dangers.[16]

Fear is also related to other emotions in Aristotle's model. Fear and anger cannot coexist as fear is an acknowledgement of inferiority, and an inferior cannot be angry with a superior.[17] It is no slight to be treated according to one's station, and anger must contain a reasonable expectation of actually getting revenge, which is unlikely in the case of social superiors. Fear and love (*philia*) are not compatible either; Aristotle states that nobody likes someone that is feared,[18] and intense fear also drives out pity.[19] Fear in the form of cowardice gives rise to shame (*aiskhunê*).[20]

The emotions are generally viewed as more fleeting states of the soul in contradistinction to more permanent emotional dispositions.[21] Because of this, the emotions do not provide a sound basis for judging the virtues and vices of an individual, whereas emotional dispositions reflect an individual's character to a greater extent. However, this does not mean that the emotions play no part whatsoever in the evaluation of a person's character. Emotional dispositions, on the other hand, can involve an excess or a deficit of emotion, since emotions should be experienced at the right time, on the right occasion, towards the right people, for the right purpose and in the right manner (cf. Chapter 3.1).[22] It is therefore important to learn to moderate one's emotional responses in accordance with socially accepted norms, or to achieve the virtuous mean. In this context, it is important to note that the emotions are seen as essential to a good life.[23] Emotional dispositions also vary with age: the young are hot-headed while the old are fearful,[24] and the middle-aged strike a balance between these two extremes.[25]

As for Aristotle's contributions to the therapy of the emotions, his famous concept of catharsis is the most celebrated. It is introduced in his *Poetics*, the foundational work of Western literary criticism. Though its real nature is hotly debated (see below), the idea of catharsis has remained attractive, perhaps because early understandings of it as purgation or purification conform to our own preunderstandings of emotion as a safety valve, a heritage of the psychological theories many of us have internalised whether we realise it or not. As we will see shortly, the notion of catharsis as safety valve is only one of several possibilities for the interpretation of this mysterious phenomenon.[26]

Before we turn to catharsis itself, however, we need to discuss the precondition for it, namely the characteristics of a well-made plot. The

emotions of pity and fear play a fundamental role in Aristotle's understanding of the literary genres of tragedy and also epic: pity and fear are viewed as the audience's proper response to these genres as such. According to the argument advanced in the *Poetics*, it is "through pity and fear" that tragedy accomplishes "the catharsis of these emotions",[27] and pity and fear are essentially aroused through a well-constructed plot. The well-made plot must be unified, its events being linked to each other in a probable or necessary sequence. In other words, each event should be the consequence of a preceding one.[28] This stress on the internal coherence of the plot, which is heavy in Aristotle's account, highlights the explanatory function of narrative;[29] it helps us to make sense of human life and experience by giving us an idea of the causal relations between events.

The events represented in the plot should themselves be fearful and pitiful, which they are if they occur unexpectedly but as a consequence of earlier events.[30] The plot should also contain a transformation from prosperity to adversity (or the reverse), ideally in the form of reversal or recognition, since these are regarded as emotionally persuasive. Reversal is a change to the opposite direction of events, such as in Sophocles' (496/95–406 BC) *Oedipus*, where the messenger coming to assuage Oedipus' fears about his mother actually plunges him into despair by showing him who he really is. Recognition is a change from ignorance to knowledge resulting in friendship or enmity, and determining prosperity or adversity; Oedipus' recognition of his own identity and the crimes he has unwittingly committed, murdering his father and marrying his mother, are once again cases in point.[31] Preferably reversal and recognition should occur in conjunction as this will give cause for pity and fear, and adversity and prosperity will follow from these circumstances.[32]

However, whether the events of a plot are construed as pitiful and fearful is very much dependent on the type of character who experiences them. Aristotle says that tragedy must not depict good men changing from prosperity to adversity, as this will fail to evoke pity and fear: it is simply disgusting. Conversely, representing wicked people changing from adversity to prosperity is not tragic at all. Similarly, showing such people undergoing a change from prosperity to adversity might perhaps arouse some sympathy, but it will not evoke pity or fear. For pity – as Aristotle explained more fully in the *Rhetoric* – is aroused by undeserved suffering, and fear is something we feel for someone like ourselves, and most of us do not regard ourselves as exceedingly wicked.[33]

Thus, the person falling into adversity must be average in the sense of neither eminent in virtue and justice nor the cause of his own downfall through evil and depravity, but rather as the result of some error. This error,

which can be of many sorts, though it can often be glossed as some kind of ignorance, makes his fall intelligible, but it also exonerates him from being morally responsible for his misfortune, and hence a fitting object of pity. At the same time, he is sufficiently like ourselves to arouse fear.[34]

It has been argued that Aristotle's insistence on the actions of the human characters as the sole explanation for their downfall serves to exclude the traditional explanations of the power of chance and divine and demonic forces in human life.[35] The stories constituting our material do not conform to such a 'secular' view of what influences human life, but align themselves with the traditional one. Nevertheless, though this aspect of Aristotle's theory cannot be applied to the stories, his emphasis on the unity of the plot remains important to our understanding of their emotional effect.

The ways in which tragedy was thought to affect its audience emotionally are closely tied to Aristotle's conception of *mimêsis*. As some form of representation of reality, poetry must achieve its effect by making us believe in the reality of its world, on the one hand, for otherwise we would not respond to it as we would to real experiences, i.e. with pity and fear. On the other hand, we are fully aware of its unreality, or we would not respond to it with pleasure, as we do to mimetic representations.[36]

This brings us to the vexed question of catharsis. What Aristotle might have meant with catharsis is the object of an extensive scholarly debate, and it is not difficult to see why; in the *Poetics*, it is only mentioned once, in the definition of tragedy as "through pity and fear accomplishing the catharsis of such emotions".[37] It also occurs quite briefly in the *Politics*, in a discussion of the formative power of music on emotion and character. The paucity of evidence gives leeway to speculation, a fact that is reflected in the contradictory stances of interpreters from the Renaissance onwards.

In the *Politics*, Aristotle says that the emotions – such as pity, fear and ecstasy – that some people feel especially strongly exist in us all to a lesser or greater extent. Those who are susceptible to being possessed by such emotions, particularly ecstasy, are healed by sacred melodies, just as if they had been restored by a medical treatment and catharsis.[38] This reference to ecstasy, which was a feature of orgiastic dancing, has prompted the interpretation of Aristotelian catharsis as a purgation of the emotions, a therapeutic relief, on the assumption that Aristotle construed all emotion as pathological (which he did not).[39] More recently, it has been suggested that Aristotle might have envisaged many forms of catharsis, and also different degrees of "the same" catharsis. The catharsis deriving from music might not be the same as tragic catharsis.[40]

Another influential trend glosses catharsis as intellectual clarification.[41] It places great emphasis on Aristotle's remarks on the pleasure humans experience in mimesis, which is intellectual in nature. The fact that the catharsis of tragedy is achieved through words has been stressed, as this implies that a mental processing is necessarily involved before the words can have any effect. An important part of this process is the audience's identification with the characters, which permits it to achieve new insights about itself by universalising the experiences of the characters.[42] Through tragic catharsis, we learn more about the cause, nature and effect of pity and fear.

Even though the strong statement of the view of catharsis as intellectual clarification is far from embraced by all, it should nevertheless be noted that most contemporary interpretations of catharsis do acknowledge a cognitive element in the cathartic process.[43] This is quite in line with Aristotle's conception of emotion generally, which, as mentioned above, has a vital cognitive dimension.

A further development of this trend singles out clarification as the fundamental meaning of catharsis, but objects to its being restricted to a solely intellectual one. Appealing to the history of the Greek word *katharsis* and its cognates, it is argued that catharsis is at root "the removal of some obstacle … that makes the item less *clear* than it is in its proper state". One component of this clarification is cognitive, but the psychological, emotional one is equally important. On this view, the emotions of pity and fear help us understand the conditions for fostering a good character and identify core values that we might recognise only as they are under threat. In this respect, pity and fear are important in themselves, not merely a means to a more refined intellectual state. They educate us to make us exhibit appropriate responses, and are valuable in and of themselves.[44]

The interpretations of catharsis discussed thus far all assume that catharsis is a homeopathic process, i.e. that tragic pity and fear effect a purgation, purification or clarification of pity and fear within the audience; they act on emotions like themselves. Since there is little evidence of homeopathic thinking elsewhere in Aristotle's extant works, or in Greek thought generally, the Renaissance conception of catharsis as an allopathic process – that tragic pity and fear influence emotions unlike themselves – has been revived, though this position still finds rather few supporters.[45]

According to this account, tragic pity and fear are the antidote to their opposites, shamelessness and fearlessness. It is more likely that we fail to feel fear and pity when we really should in real life, rather than that we feel an excess of them, and the experience of tragedy remedies this lack of proper emotion by making us fear for and pity the characters of the play. Hence tragedy

educates the emotions and guides the audience towards the mean, shame or respect (*aidôs*). This applies to the young as well as to adults, who are equally prone to shamelessness, though for different reasons. For the young, tragedy increases their understanding of the human condition by inducing them to see real-life fearful and pitiable incidents, encouraged by their representation in tragedy, and to listen to the advice of older and wiser people. For adults, tragedy functions as repetition of the lessons already learned, as these must to be relearned from time to time.[46]

We apply these two interpretations of the Aristotelian theory of catharsis to the reception of Aristomenes' Story in Chapter 7. Applying a theory developed for the literary genre of tragedy to this originally oral story, so masterfully reworked by Apuleius (b. *c.* AD 125) in his *Metamorphosis*, is not as far-fetched as it might seem. Apuleius explicitly invokes tragedy as a frame of reference in introducing the story, as Aristomenes orders his luckless friend Socrates to "remove the tragic curtain"[47] when he tells him of his woes.

4.2 Epicurus and the Epicureans: Therapies for Pain and Fear

The Epicurean school, which was founded by Epicurus (341–270 BC), is of particular interest for us, as the Epicureans stressed the detrimental effects of fear to an unusually high degree. Their arguments concerning the fear of death and fear of the gods, the two major stumbling blocks to human happiness according to them, figure prominently in Chapter 9. Moreover, the Epicureans developed therapeutic techniques to rid people of these debilitating fears.

The reason for the prominent place fear occupied in Epicurean thought was its serious impact on human behaviour: "we do everything on this account, that we should neither feel bodily pain nor fear", Epicurus says.[48] Diogenes of Oenoanda (second century AD), who erected a monumental inscription on Epicurean philosophy in his hometown in Lycia,[49] distinguishes between two types of fear: one with a clear object, such as the fear of fire, which makes us avoid fire to escape death, and the other an indefinite fear which creeps upon us when our thoughts are occupied elsewhere.[50] In modern terms, this indefinite fear is perhaps best glossed as anxiety, and it might be prompted by imaginary threats.[51] This distinction plays a significant role in Chapter 5, in which we suggest that the transformation of an indefinite fear into a definite one is a crucial element in therapy. Lucretius (*c.* 94–55/51 BC) also touches on this topic in his great didactic poem *On the Nature of Things*, in which he summarised Epicurean thinking:

> For just as children tremble and are afraid of everything in the gloomy darkness, so we are sometimes afraid in broad daylight of something that should no more be feared than that which strikes the children with fear and imagines events in the future. It is necessary that this dark terror of the rational part be destroyed not by the rays of the sun nor the brilliant shafts of day, but by the appearance and understanding of nature.[52]

David Konstan has argued that most people tend to view these anxieties, if we may so call them, not as the figments of the imagination that they really are, but as a fear of things that truly exist and that can inflict real harm on us. We mistake anxiety for fear of objective dangers and behave accordingly, as if our anxiety could be dispelled simply by avoiding these dangers.[53] We will be offering the reverse argument, that regarding these anxieties as a fear of things that truly exist might be beneficial in some cases.

This "mistaking" of anxieties for objective fears is especially evident in the fear of death, which the Epicureans singled out as particularly vicious, together with the fear of the gods. Lucretius represents the fear of death as the wellspring of many other evils, such as avarice and the blind desire for honours, cruelty, envy and even a hatred of life itself. In other words, the fear of death breeds various kinds of insatiable desires, and it has been suggested that this is precisely because the fear of death is being handled in the same way as a fear of objective dangers. The crux is, of course, that death cannot be avoided, and the struggle to escape it is in vain. The impossibility to protect oneself against death results in ever-renewed efforts to find security in material things, in an ever more frantic accumulation of wealth, an ever-increasing ambition to seize political power.

Lucretius also summarises a number of arguments to prove Epicurus' dictum that death is of no consequence to us when we are dead. According to Epicurean doctrine, the soul is mortal and no longer exists when body and soul have been separated by death.[54] Thus, the dead do not feel anything and cannot be harmed after their demise. For the same reason, they cannot be miserable, because you have to exist in some sense to have feeling.[55] When people are troubled by the fate of their bodies after death – that they will be rotting in the tomb, be consumed by the flames of the funeral pyre or thrown to the beasts – they have not truly accepted the idea that they do not survive in some form after death. They resent being born mortal and cannot see that there will be no other self, still living, that can grieve the dead self and be pained by its laceration or burning.[56]

In his treatise *On Death*, Philodemus of Gadara (*c.* 110–*c.* 40/35 BC) – an Epicurean philosopher of influence in late Republican Rome – addresses a number of fears related to death, several of which are directly relevant to

the concerns of this book.[57] He covers the fear of a premature death, of dying childless, of dying abroad and of not receiving an honest burial. In general, he argues against the popular assumptions on which the stories we study are based, and, when he makes concessions to popular thought, it is for rather different reasons.

The basic premise of one of these fears, the fear of a premature death, is that the longer a life is, the more goods will be enjoyed before death. Therefore, the young who die prematurely are considered unfortunate, since they have been deprived of many good things. In reply to this idea, Philodemus stresses that a young person can live more wisely and fully – and thus have a more complete life – than an old man who never appreciated what life has given him. The good life is a life free from physical and mental pain, not necessarily a long life. However, if the desire to live a life of a specific duration springs from the wish to live the best life possible before dying, i.e., living in freedom from the trouble caused by the desires, this is perfectly lawful. It is very seemly to try to attain the best disposition possible before dying.[58]

Philodemus also considers it uncalled for to grieve dying childless. If we want our names to live on, we are not dependent on children to carry it on, since many other people will bear the same name, and as for leaving our property to strangers, this might sometimes be preferable to bequeathing it to depraved offspring. In addition, there is no guarantee that fortune will not dispossess our children of their inheritance anyway. To be saddened at the prospect of leaving one's parents, children or wife in misfortune as a result of one's death is, however, a natural cause of concern, stirring the sensible person to tears. Dying abroad is also a legitimate source of suffering, especially when relatives have been left behind in the old homeland, but this regret should merely prick us, it should not bring us pain, much less a great one. Relating this situation to Epicurus' opinion that the dead lack sensation, Philodemus argues that we will not perceive that our body is lying in a foreign country when we are dead, since we will not be perceiving anything at all.[59]

For Philodemus, the fear of not receiving a proper burial might be justified only for those who have not bothered to make the proper arrangements for themselves, and this concession is more due to the inferiority of their character than to the misery of their lack of burial. When the good person is prevented by fortune or the wickedness of men from receiving burial, this cannot possibly bring him pain, as he will not exist at the time, and he would not imagine that others would criticise him and deem him wretched on this account. Sensible people do not make such absurd claims, and those who do are not worth listening to, not in life and even less when we no longer exist. It makes no difference whether we are insensate above or below ground,

Philodemus points out, and if our remains for some reason are exposed, as oftentimes happens, this does not render us pitiable when we are dead, because both the properly buried and the unburied have been dissolved into their elements, whatever these are thought to be.[60]

Most people are caught unawares by death, as if they were surprised that they had to die eventually, and when necessity approaches, great hopes are dashed. The correct attitude to death, then, is to walk around as if already wearing one's burial shroud, having attained happiness and being grateful for each additional day one has left to live. Such a person will not consider his life deficient when it is cut short by death. The daily contemplation of death is a source of strength to the wise person.[61]

The fear of death and the fear of the gods tend to reinforce each other, as the belief in divine punishment in the afterlife increases the fear of death, and the fear of death on account of what might happen in the afterlife supports the fear of the gods. Philodemus remarks that the fear of the gods is generally easier to eradicate, since these beliefs are largely unconsidered, whereas the fear of death often springs from latent beliefs, which can be very difficult to get rid of.[62] These two fears are severely debilitating, and Epicurus proposed a remedy of rational argument to displace them. Correct knowledge of the nature of the universe banishes the false beliefs on which these fears are based, and Epicurus recommends committing relevant facts of nature to memory.[63]

As for the distinction between emotion and mental disposition, it was one the Epicureans also made. Lucretius stressed that although education can be used to make individuals seem equally polished on the surface, it nevertheless leaves their original constitution intact: "And it must not be presumed that faults can be extracted by the roots, so that one will not more readily explode in bitter anger, another a bit more swiftly be distressed by fear, or a third suffer some insult more indulgently than is equitable".[64] By putting our reason to good use, however, we can render these remnants of our constitution insignificant to a happy life. Lucretius assures us that "nothing prevents us from living a life worthy of the gods".[65] In his work *On Anger*, Philodemus attributed natural (good) anger to a good disposition (*diathesis*), empty (bad) anger to a bad one. Accordingly, a disposition is essentially about habits of thought, how you choose to appraise a situation and determine the proper response. With a good disposition, your responses to different situations are proportionate to their requirements, with a bad one you overreact and create problems for yourself.[66]

The Epicureans had a well-developed battery of therapeutic techniques, which might not be so surprising given that philosophy had an essentially therapeutic role for Epicurus: the philosopher's argument is empty if it does

not contribute to the healing of human suffering. This attitude seems to suffuse Epicurean philosophy as a whole; it has been said that all philosophical argument amounts to therapy in the Epicurean community.[67] Though this is a rather strong claim, it is not excessively exaggerated.

The Epicurean therapy of the emotions is, then, fundamentally based on arguments, and the aim of argumentation is to rid oneself of fear and achieve tranquillity. In this respect, it is a cognitive form of therapy, but it does not exclude a consideration of feelings and imaginings, which were thought to give the individual emotion its unique experiential quality. To return to Philodemus' discussion on anger, he used the criterion of feeling to distinguish natural anger (*orgê*) from empty fury (*thumos*): "It is obvious that fury differs from anger both in so far as magnitude and quality (*poiotêti*) is concerned, and it is not natural at all".[68]

Some therapeutic techniques are very rationalist, in the sense that they rely on the accurate presentation of facts based on Epicurean physics. Thus, Epicurus exhorted his disciples to study natural science, since he considered it the only way to overcome the fear of celestial phenomena and the fear of death. Without this knowledge, man is surrendered to what can be guessed from stories, such as the myths of the gods and of existence in the Underworld.[69] In Chapter 9, this Epicurean remedy against the fear of death is being contrasted to the more unorthodox consolation offered by traditional ghost stories.

Memory is involved in the well-known Epicurean practice of shifting attention from present ills to past pleasures. Epicurus himself used this method on his deathbed, recalling his conversations with his friend Idomeneus in one account to overcome the intense pain of his illness, and remembering his doctrines and discoveries according to another.[70] The benefits of this technique are illustrated by Cicero's Epicurean spokesman Torquatus in the work *On the Ends of Good and Evil*:

> But just as we are cheered by those goods we are expecting, so we rejoice in those that we remember. But fools are tormented by the memory of evils; the wise are delighted by former goods renewed in pleasing recollection. However, we are permitted both to abolish misfortune in almost perpetual oblivion and recall favourable circumstances with delight and pleasure. Yet when we contemplate what has passed with an astute and attentive mind, then grief follows if these events were bad, joy if they were good.[71]

In order to escape the evils of erotic love, Lucretius thinks it proper "to flee from images and to frighten off the sustenance of love, and turn the mind elsewhere".[72] Here the shift of attention is motivated by a wish to effect a change in one's beliefs about love, that our needs can be satisfied by one particular individual only.

Moreover, the kind of perspective we adopt in the face of disaster is important. Assuming an objective point of view on our situation helps us to disentangle ourselves from conventional values. For instance, the wise man innocently condemned to death will not regard his sufferings as worse than those inflicted by an illness, and will not consider it ignoble to die in this manner as he remains convinced that his life has been blessed and without reproach.[73] When it is too difficult to achieve such a detached attitude, such as in the throes of erotic passion, the redescription of familiar things in unfamiliar terms might be useful. Lucretius employs this therapeutic technique to great effect in his diatribe on love in *On the Nature of Things*. He notes that many men tend to praise the blemishes of their mistresses as the most endearing features of their physical appearance, and simply reverses the process: the girl described as "disorderly" is "dirty and stinking", the "slender little love … is too thin to live", and the girl nick-named "the kiss" is actually just "thick-lipped".[74]

This therapeutic technique exploits rhetorical flourishes, which also increases their emotional charge. Though ostensibly used to reduce emotion, especially of an undesirable kind, it simultaneously recruits other emotions, such as horror, disgust and ridicule, to achieve this effect. The same is true of the following technique in which the ugly aspects of emotion are stressed, namely censure (*psegein*) or moral portraiture, a therapeutic technique serving to put the evils following closely upon emotion before the eyes.[75] In his *On Anger*, Philodemus argues that it is necessary to demonstrate what fallacies are involved in anger and how much evil it gives rise to in order to show the sad consequences it might have.[76] Nevertheless, censure should not constitute the remedy in and of itself; it is employed as a tool to make people understand the danger posed by emotion and to make them avoid it. When this has been achieved, the duty of the philosopher is to suggest ways in which we can avoid falling prey to emotions such as anger.

Concretely, censure takes the form of portraits of individuals prone to a particular emotion, and it is important to reveal its unpleasant physical, psychological and social consequences. For example, the angry person suffers from burning, swelling, irritation, indignation, anguish and a powerful desire to pursue his enemy to get vengeance. The starkly physical symptoms of anger are a hazard to the individual, as he is afflicted by them all his life and is driven to constant unhappiness because of them. They can also be physically dangerous, as they might lead to terminal illness.[77]

The irascibility of these individuals prods them into committing pathetic and heinous acts: they childishly throw stones or fall into posts, walls and ditches, but on a more serious note, they also cut out the eyes and bite off the noses of their adversaries, or even kill them when they are victorious. Their

disposition tends to obscure their judgement too, and not infrequently they attack people stronger than themselves only to receive severe punishment for their presumption. They fall foul of the law and of those just as irascible as themselves, and are sometimes forced into exile.[78]

For a moral portrait such as this to be believable, the audience must be convinced that all these traits can actually converge in a single individual. In this way, we will develop an antipathy to the whole personality of the offender, not just deplore certain features of his personality. This will encourage us to work with ourselves to avoid becoming like him. It should be noted, however, that the Epicureans furnished positive examples as well: Epicurus and his closest friends were often advanced as moral exemplars.[79]

In Chapter 7, we argue that this kind of moral portraiture is used in the stories of man-eating demons to fully bring out the hazards of attaching oneself to unworthy women. In this endeavour, negative description of the women is employed as a tool in severing the emotional links between the men and their *femmes fatales* in the most literal sense of the word.

4.3 The Stoics: The Consolation and Reformation of Emotion as Judgement

The Stoic school of philosophy, which was founded by Zeno of Citium (335–263 BC), is a crucial component in our inquiry, both because the Romans developed their own brand of Stoicism called Roman Stoicism flourishing in the Roman Imperial period;[80] and because it pioneered some sophisticated therapeutic techniques that we appeal to in Chapters 5, 7 and 10. Chrysippus of Soli's (*c*. 280–207 BC) astute description of the foibles of lovers is also instrumental in Chapter 7.

The foundations of the Stoic philosophy of emotion were laid by Zeno and developed by his successors, very prolifically in the numerous writings of Chrysippus, all of which are now only preserved in fragments. Zeno primarily viewed emotion as a movement of the soul contrary to reason and nature (*alogos*; *para phusin*), or as an excessive impulse (*hormê pleonazousa*).[81] The movements of the soul were of four kinds, corresponding to the four-part emotional grid advanced by the Stoics: pleasure (*hêdonê*), pain or distress (*lupê*), appetite (*epithumia*) and fear (*phobos*):

Pleasure is described as an unreasonable expansion or elation, pain as an unreasonable contraction, appetite as an unreasonable reaching out or desire, and fear as an unreasonable turning away.[82] Zeno also characterised

all emotion as a fluttering (*ptoia*), and Chrysippus explained this wording as a reference to the agitated and random nature of emotions.[83]

It is unclear whether Zeno introduced the most controversial feature of the Stoic theory of emotion, namely that emotions actually are beliefs (*doxai*) or judgements (*kriseis*), or whether this was a later innovation.[84] However, there is general agreement that Chrysippus was the one to introduce the dual structure of the judgements constituting emotion. He maintained, firstly, that all emotion involves the judgement that something good or bad is at hand, and secondly, the judgement that it is actually appropriate to react emotionally.[85] The four primary emotions mentioned above therefore exemplified two types of judgement: that something is good (pleasure and appetite) or bad (pain and fear), as well as two distinct temporal orientations, one to the present (pleasure and pain) and one to the future (appetite and fear).[86]

Despite being value judgements and hence the result of a cognitive process, the Stoics nevertheless regarded emotions as deleterious to the individual, as they generally focused on the values considered *wrong*. In Stoic doctrine, only virtue and vice were intrinsically good and evil and everything else was indifferent, since we have full control over nothing but our own character. Life, health, beauty, strength, wealth, as well as their opposites death, disease, pain, ugliness, frailty and poverty should therefore be viewed as indifferent.[87] This is borne out by Cicero's complaint against Cleanthes, who seems to have held that removing the belief that grief is evil would also extirpate this painful emotion. Cicero sourly comments that such a form of therapy is fit for a Stoic sage only, and he is in no need of it.[88] Thus, emotions in the conventional sense ought to be eradicated as they are based on mistaken judgements, and the Stoic ideal was freedom from such emotions (*apatheia*).[89]

Seneca the Younger (4 BC/1AD–*c.* AD 65), one of the greatest Roman Stoics, developed the Stoic account of emotions in interesting ways, for instance by introducing the idea of the three stages of emotion. He was convinced that emotion had to be subject to the will (*voluntas*) in order to be possible to influence through rational thinking. He held that all our sensations lying outside our conscious control were invincible and unavoidable, just as the shudder at being sprinkled with cold water, our aversion at touching certain disgusting things, our hair standing on end at the reception of bad news or blushing at obscene language. None of these reactions are voluntary, in Seneca's view, and no amount of ratiocination will prevent them from happening.[90]

The first stage of emotion is like this, an involuntary mental shock (*ictus animi*) that is a preliminary step to emotion rather than emotion proper. This first movement (*primus motus*) was regarded as purely corporeal in character.

Therefore, the defining feature of emotion for Seneca is not that we are moved by our perceptions, but that we permit ourselves to follow this fortuitous impulse. The assent to the impulse, subordinating it to the will, constitutes the second movement (*alter motus*). The third movement (*tertius motus*) is unrestrained and overpowers reason, leading to an unreasonable, fully-fledged emotion; the individual is being carried away (*efferri*) by the emotion.[91] This notion of the three stages of emotion is discussed in Chapter 9, in an attempt to elucidate some specific features of Stoic emotion management in Pliny the Younger's ghost story.

However, in contrast to these inherently ruinous emotions, the Stoics also suggested that good emotions (*eupatheiai*) existed. Good emotions did not rely on mistaken beliefs but on accurate judgements of what constituted good and evil, i.e., virtue and vice. These good emotions are counterparts to the ordinary emotions: joy (*khara*) replaced pleasure, being a rational expansion; wish (*boulêsis*) displaced appetite, being a rational reaching out; and caution (*eulabeia*) supplanted fear, being a rational turning away.[92]

There was no counterpart to pain or distress, since the ideal Stoic sage – who is the only one to experience good emotions – would not be pained by vice in the present, neither his own (for then he would not be a sage, as he is free from vice), nor that of anyone else (if he were upset by this, he would not maintain his mental balance and would not be a sage).[93] Joy would then be elation at present virtue, wish a desire for future virtue, and caution avoidance of future vice.

In the Stoic scheme of things, fear comprises several subordinate emotions, and both their number and their definitions could vary. One list of types of fear, to be found in Diogenes Laertius, mentions the following ones, using Greek terminology:

- terror (*deima*) is a fear producing fright;
- shrinking (*oknos*) is a fear of having to act;
- shame (*aiskhunê*) is the fear of disgrace;
- consternation (*ekplêxis*) is a fear at the appearance of an unaccustomed thing;
- alarm (*thorubos*) is a fear caused by the pressure of sound, and
- anguish (*agônia*) is a fear experienced when an important issue remains uncertain.[94]

Another list, also in Greek, adds:

- fright (*deos*);
- dismay (*kataplêxis*), a fear caused by an overwhelming impression;
- timidity (*psophodeeia*), an empty fear;
- procrastination (*mellêsis*), a shrinking from doing what one has resolved to do;
- an affright (*orrôdia*) springing from a perception;

- superstition (*deisidaimonia*), the fear of divine powers or spirits; and
- cowardice (*deilia*), the retreat from an appropriate situation due to the appearance of something terrible.[95]

When Cicero enumerates eight kinds of fear in his discussion of Stoic doctrines in Latin, some of the terms correspond to the Greek ones listed above, while others do not:

- sloth (*pigritia*), the fear of ensuing exertion;
- shame (*pudor*), a fear causing blood to diffuse;
- terror (*terror*, corresponding to *ekplêxis*), a debilitating fear resulting in pallor, trembling and chattering teeth, just as shame causes blushing;
- apprehension (*timor*, corresponding to *deima*), a fear of approaching evil;
- dread (*pavor*), a fear disturbing one's state of mind;
- faintness (*exanimatio*, corresponding to *agônia*), a fear following dread, being as it were its companion;
- confusion (*conturbatio*, corresponding to *thorubos*), a fear driving out all thought; and
- fearfulness (*formido*), a permanent fear.[96]

The relations between fear and other emotions are seldom spelled out, except for the general contention that fear pertains to an evil in the future, distress to an evil in the present. As for the good emotions, there are only two acceptable forms of caution: modesty (Greek: *aidôs*), caution concerning receiving just censure; and purity or piety (Greek: *hagneia*), caution concerning sins against the gods. In contrast to fear, caution in these matters is based on value judgements that are true, rendering it morally justified to exercise it.[97] The notion of piety as a positive and thus acceptable emotion for a Stoic philosopher is discussed in Chapter 9.

The ordinary emotions could develop into two types of alarming conditions: on the one hand into diseases (Greek: *nosêmata*, Latin: *morbi*) and infirmities (Greek: *arrôstêmata*, Latin: *aegrotationes*), and, on the other hand, into aversions (Latin: *offensiones*). This happens when the violent agitation of the emotions has become rooted and settled in our constitution. The diseases and infirmities originate in pleasure and appetite, whereas the aversions spring from fear.[98] Chrysippus of Soli advanced a somewhat similar argument, as he noted the stubbornness with which lovers and angry people held onto their decision to love or to be angry, spurning the advice of others.[99]

Seneca the Younger shared the opinion that emotions (*adfectus*) were diseases, and he rejected the position of the Aristotelian school that emotions should be moderated rather than extirpated, wondering how any "moderate" disease could possibly be salutary or useful. His argument presupposes that it is easier to prevent an emotion from arising in the first place than to make it stop once it has begun. All emotion is feeble at first, but soon it rouses itself and acquires more strength, and few of us are able to resist its pull. Therefore,

the best course of action is to avoid emotion altogether: using a metaphor, we should be smart enough to step back from slippery ground, seeing that we stand far from firmly even on dry land. Seneca also states that the mind is not somehow detached from the emotions, observing them from without, but is actually transmuted into the emotion, and hence no longer able to call back its useful and salutary power once it has been weakened. Therefore, reason and emotion represent the transformation of the mind into something better in the first case or worse in the second.[100]

Furthermore, the notion of the three movements in emotion entails interesting modifications of Stoic ethics. As essentially being beyond our control, first movements are exempt from moral evaluation, for how could anything independent of our volition be a moral failure? Even the sage experiences first movements, and they do not affect his moral standing. Thus, Seneca's conception of first movements changes the relationship between emotion and character as traditionally conceived in Stoicism; some experiences no longer count as either emotions or actions, since they lack the crucial element of voluntariness.[101] Cultivating one's character was nevertheless seen as of prime importance. Though it is difficult to alter our constitution, an awareness of how it works enables us to counter its more negative properties.

Cicero approaches the distinction between emotion and mental disposition by stating that people can be prone to different diseases, so that it becomes ingrained and part of their disposition. As he points out, it is often a disposition we refer to when we say that people are envious, malevolent, invidious, fearful and compassionate, and by this we do not mean that they are always experiencing this emotion, but that it happens frequently. He sees no great difference between diseases and infirmities, and regards them as a subclass of vice (*vitiositas*), but he hesitates to include the emotions as a third subcategory, as vice is a permanent disposition while emotions are changeable. Unfortunately, infirmities and diseases of the soul are more difficult to eradicate than the greatest vice, because they cannot be cured as rapidly as the vices can be removed.[102]

Chrysippus attributed emotional behaviour to the softness and weakness of the soul: when the soul yielded, failed to endure and to assist reason. He recognised that people could grow weak for many different reasons: one could do it in response to danger, another in response to gain or loss; the bottom line was that every situation of this sort defeats and enslaves us, so that we, by yielding to it, even betray our friends and our cities and perform many shameful acts. Here Chrysippus takes Menelaus' encounter with Helen at the fall of Troy as an example; Menelaus had resolved to kill his errant wife, but when he confronted her, he was completely overwhelmed by her beauty and

weakly let his sword fall. He could not bring himself to stand by his decision, but gave in to his passion.

These weaknesses were thought to be due to upsets in the pneumatic tension of the governing part, which in turn affected the reactions of the individual. For the Stoics, both body and soul consisted of *pneuma*, "breath" or "warm air", the same substance but in different degrees of tension; psychic *pneuma* was the highest form of *pneuma*.[103] The governing part (Greek: *hêgemonikon*) was the highest of the eight parts of the soul, and it was likened to an octopus exercising control over the other parts with the aid of its tentacles, i.e., it stretched out *pneuma* to the other parts, enabling them to function properly.[104]

The governing part in turn coordinated four separate but interrelated faculties: perception (Greek: *phantasia*), assent (Greek: *sunkatathesis*), impulse (Greek: *hormê*) and reason (Greek: *logos*). Perception comprises both the process of perceiving and what is perceived; assent is the interpretation of this perception involving an assent to its truthfulness; and impulse prods the individual into action. Reason's task was to ensure that these other faculties worked rationally, and the duty of the soul as a whole was to assist reason in this admittedly complicated task.[105] In Menelaus' case, he perceived Helen as overwhelmingly beautiful, assented to the truthfulness of this judgement and to the corresponding judgement that the appropriate thing to do would be to be overwhelmed by his passion for her, which prodded him into abandoning his former resolve.

Weakness of character correlated with lower pneumatic tension, and people suffering from this weakness surrendered more easily to emotion, whereas someone with higher pneumatic tension was better able to resist excessive emotional impulses. The corollary of this was that character could be strengthened by means of moral exercise, which also strengthened pneumatic tension.[106] We use this conception of the physiological nature of moral virtue in Chapter 9 to explain the theory behind the fearlessness of a Stoic philosopher in the face of fearful ghosts.

This brings us to the therapy of emotions. In this context too, Cicero is central for our knowledge of Stoic therapies of the emotions. In his work *Tusculan Disputations,* he compares different philosophical methods of therapy, explaining their implications for therapeutic practice and evaluating their efficacy, but generally settles on a Stoicising account.[107] In Chapter 5, we use Cicero's presentation of Stoic therapy and consolation to understand the therapeutic functions of stories of child-killing demons.

Thus, Cicero's basic procedure in the curing of emotion was to analyse the cause of the emotions in order to be able to find a suitable cure, in much

the same way a doctor moves from an understanding of the cause of a sickness to applying a remedy. The cause always lay in belief, either in the belief that something was good or that it was bad. This belief actually has two components: the belief that something really has occurred, and the belief that it is good or bad. It also had to be a fresh belief, in the sense that it was being renewed by the further belief that one should feel in a specific way.[108] This sense of duty or obligation in our emotional reactions is seldom the result of conscious reflection, but rather a matter of tacit assumptions. What it means for therapy, however, is that we can influence our own behaviour by changing our beliefs about how we should react.[109]

One method he advocates, with certain modifications, is the practice of pre-rehearsal of future ills, which he attributes to the Cyrenaics, though other schools such as the Stoics also adopted it. The Cyrenaics were an early Hellenistic philosophical school founded by Aristippus of Cyrene (*c.* 435–*c.* 355 BC) who claimed that pleasure was the goal of life. The Cyrenaics also held that it was specifically unforeseen and unanticipated misfortune that gave rise to distress, and therefore proposed that one should prepare oneself for every eventuality by looking ahead to misfortunes to come, as this made them easier to bear.[110] Though he did not believe that unexpectedness was the only cause of distress, Cicero nevertheless finds the method of pre-rehearsal useful:

> Although this one thing [unexpected misfortune] alone does not produce the greatest distress, as mental foresight and preparation nevertheless avails much to diminish the pain, a human being should always contemplate all events of life. And without doubt, this indeed constitutes pre-eminent and divine wisdom: to thoroughly comprehend and deal with human events; to be surprised by nothing when it occurs; and – before it has happened – to imagine anything can happen.[111]

Pre-rehearsal is a "shield against misfortune" that softens its blow when it actually arrives, but Cicero insists that it cannot be the nature of the event, its unexpectedness, that is the problem. If that were the case, anticipating all these ills would hardly make them easier to tolerate: the events would still be distressing. The problem must be one of belief, for otherwise there would be no way of changing one's attitude to those events. There is some truth in the statement of the Cyrenaics, however: people do tend to regard unexpected events as more serious than they are, and this, Cicero says, is for two reasons. On the one hand, the very suddenness of the event leaves little time for deliberation, and it is easy to overestimate the gravity of the situation. On the other, people might think that if they had anticipated the event, they might have been able to prevent it; guilt enters the picture and increases their distress.[112]

Cicero discerns three sources of consolation in the practice of pre-rehearsal. Firstly, considering possible misfortunes in advance gives them a certain familiarity, and has made one accustomed to them when they finally occur. This diminishes the suffering they inflict. Secondly, it enables us to realize that misfortunes are a natural part of human life, and that enduring them is also human; we must resolve to accept the fundamental conditions of human existence. Contemplating the nature of things, the mutability of life and the weakness of mankind is not a cause of distress, he emphasises, but an avenue to wisdom. Thirdly, it makes us understand that the only true evil is individual wrongdoing, and when no-one can be held responsible for the event, there is no wrongdoing.[113]

When we undertake to offer consolation to an individual in distress, Cicero mentions three available methods. The first is a more abstract one of focusing on the nature of the thing itself, what it is like and how serious it really is, i.e. not serious at all; this is mainly fit for philosophers. The second is more concrete and concentrates on giving positive examples of people showing endurance in similar situations. The third is to convince the individual that nothing can be accomplished by giving in to distress.[114] The second is most interesting for us.

Consolation by examples is connected to the argument that the event is a natural part of human life; the examples serve to prove that the events actually are tolerable, since others have managed to endure them. Thus, the examples are intended to encourage the individual to bear his misfortunes with fortitude and composure.[115] One such example of exemplary conduct given by Cicero are those who have considered it unmanly to mourn the loss of a child and therefore do not grieve. They simply do not entertain the belief that it was appropriate to do so:

> What of those who do not consider grieving appropriate for men? Such [a man] was Quintus Maximus as he carried out his son, an ex-consul, for burial; such was Lucius Paullus as he lost two sons within a few days; such was Marcus Cato on the death of his son, a praetor-designate, and such were the rest I brought together in my Consolation. What else soothed these men, if not that they did not consider grief and lamentation pertinent to men? Therefore, what others view as appropriate and accordingly tend to surrender themselves to distress, they regarded as disgraceful and rejected distress; from this it is to be understood that distress springs not from nature, but from belief.[116]

It has to be noted that the deceased in this example were young men in the prime of their lives, the loss of which others thought to be greater than the loss of a young child as in our stories. Cicero seems to imply that the men named

– all models of Republican morality – really were incapable of experiencing grief rather than merely expert at concealing it. The distinction we might draw today between the public display of emotion and inner experience does not appear to be wholly relevant in this case, though aspects of both might be involved. The fact that grief and lamentation are not "appropriate for men" seems to point to them as public display, whereas the inner experience of them is what might be construed as deleterious to their functioning as public officials.[117]

It is Cicero's firm belief that the method of therapy must be tailored to the recipient, to the kind of arguments he or she is willing to accept in the present situation. He favours the kind of cure that sets out to teach that the emotions themselves are wrong, as it is effective even in cases when the individual refuses to change his beliefs about the event in question being bad or good. It is enough to persuade him that it ought to be borne with equanimity.[118]

There are arguments available against each individual emotion. In the case of fear, Cicero writes:

> Fear is closely related to distress, for just as distress has to do with present evils, so fear has to do with future evils. For this reason, some have called it a species of distress, and others have named it "fore-grief", since it is a kind of precursor to the grief that is to follow. Therefore, the methods enabling a person to bear present afflictions will also enable him to think little of those in prospect. In both cases, we have to be careful not to do anything base, anything servile, anything soft, womanish, or effeminate, anything at all that is beneath us. The speaker should talk about fear itself, what an inconstant, weak, and feeble thing it is; however, it is also very beneficial to speak contemptuously about the things that are the objects of fear.[119]

Though not as utterly immobilising as distress,[120] fear is clearly viewed as an emotion that tends to reduce us to cowards,[121] and it is therefore advisable for the therapist to speak deprecatingly of it, as well as of its objects. The aim of therapy is to root out fear completely. It is not enough to try to moderate fears, for it is difficult to keep them within bounds, and if many miseries happen to coincide in time, distress might reach such a magnitude that it is made unbearable, and it is implicitly appropriate to give in to it.[122]

Another example of the Stoic use of story as therapy is Epictetus' technique of "critical spectatorship".[123] The term is modern, but the technique is well illustrated in Epictetus' work. Story in the form of poetry, including drama, tended to be extensively discussed in philosophy due to its great cultural impact, especially in ancient Greece where the recitation of poetry was traditionally part of young men's education; the poets were no doubt perceived as rivals in the important trade of wisdom-mongering.[124] The main objection

to poetry was often that it evoked sympathy and promoted identification with the characters; from there, the step to emulating them was not too long. This would not be such a problem, if the characters of poetry were not so morally inferior and foolish as they usually were in the eyes of philosophers.

Epictetus argued for using stories from tragedy, for example, to point to the hazards of overestimating the value of external goods, and to encourage assuming a critical stance to the characters by analysing the plot:[125]

> … but that [goal], studying how to remove lamentation and loud wailing from one's life, and the "Woe is me!" and "Wretched that I am!", and misfortune and ill-luck, and learning what death, exile, prison, hemlock is, so that we can say in prison: "Dear Crito, if it pleases the gods, let it be so", and not: "Wretched that I am, an old man, was it for this that I kept my grey hair?" Who says this? Do you think I speak of an ignoble and humble man? Does not Priam say it? Does not Oedipus say it? How many kings do not say this? For what are tragedies, if not the display in the appropriate metre of the suffering of men who have honoured things external?[126]

The spectator should be like a doctor diagnosing the psychological diseases of the characters, treating them with compassion and a wish to aid and reform them. Stoic authors suggest several ways of fostering this critical detachment, and Epictetus utilises them too: running a philosophical commentary on the action of the narrative, sometimes through attentive reading of the authorial voice in fiction (for authors do not always share the worldview of their characters); through generalisation, applying the lessons of one fictional account to other similar contexts; and through humour and satire, criticising the weaknesses of the characters with mocking irony.[127] We will see some of these strategies at work in the analysis of Apuleius' story of witches in Chapter 7.

The Family under Threat

5 The Fear of Losing a Child

Child-Killing Demons and Witches

In many cultures, including the ancient Greek and Roman world, transitions in the life cycle of the individual were perceived as threatened by various dangers. Thus, the infant, the young marriageable woman and the pregnant wife were seen as particularly vulnerable, and in popular tradition the threats to their wellbeing were embodied in the figures of various reproductive demons and witches.[1] Many of these demons, such as *lamia*, *gellô* and *mormô*, had antecedents in the Greek world, whereas the *strix* was an invention from the core of the Roman Empire – Italy – that was later adopted by the inhabitants of Roman Greece.[2]

There is much to suggest that these stories, although transmitted to us through the works of a number of ancient authors, were of oral origin. The two main arguments for such an origin are, on the one hand, the continuity of belief in these creatures until relatively recent times, and, on the other hand, the ample evidence for stories involving these creatures being told orally to children in antiquity (see Chapter 2.4). Beginning with the latter, there are descriptions of storytelling contexts involving comparable stories about the same types of supernatural creatures as the ones studied here.

As for the former, the available evidence suggests an unbroken tradition since antiquity; for instance, stories about *gelloudes* and Gellô were found in Byzantine times (in this case eighth to eleventh centuries AD).[3] These stories could also be heard in seventeenth century Greece, as Leo Allatius' *On Certain Modern Opinions among the Greeks* (1645) demonstrates.[4] In fact, they persisted well into the twentieth century in both Greece and Italy.[5] Since the later history of these traditions is so well attested in prior scholarship, we will confine ourselves to a few examples to illustrate the continued relevance of these supranormal creatures in later periods.[6]

Until quite recently, the figures of child-killing demons were dismissed by scholars as mere *Kinderschreck*, bogeys used to frighten children into submission.[7] Although they certainly had this function in antiquity, as many of our sources explicitly suggest,[8] we nevertheless agree with Sarah Iles Johnston's conclusion that people do not devise elaborate apotropaic rites against supernatural agents in whose existence they do not believe. We also concur with the more general observation that these demons have

not been accorded the scholarly attention that they deserve,[9] although this situation is beginning to be rectified. Here we propose to view them as serious representations of the fears of the ancient Romans, and as valuable therapeutic resources in the encounter with disease and death in the family.

5.1 Stories of *Strix*

In Italy itself, the *strix* (pl. *striges*) was one of these child-killing beings, although it was usually understood to be a witch, i.e., a human being with supernatural powers, rather than an otherworldly demon like Lamia, Gellô and Mormô.[10] The *strix* was often thought to assume the shape of a bird, usually an owl, but it is also mentioned in the context of a discussion on bats. Pliny the Elder (AD 23/24–79) says that, of the birds, the bat only has teats, and then he continues:

> … for I consider what they say about the *striges* all too incredible, that they insert their breasts between the lips of infants. It is generally agreed that the *strix* is already mentioned in ancient curses, but I do not think it has been established what kind of a bird it is.[11]

In this short passage, Pliny the Elder manages to say many things: that the belief in *striges* was viewed as ancient in his own day; that the form these creatures took was uncertain; and that they were thought to nurse infants. The first point is probably quite correct. Three century earlier, *striges* were so well-known that they were alluded to in a joke: the Roman playwright Plautus (fl *c*. 205–184 BC) depicts a cook disparaging the work of his colleagues by insinuating that they do not use spices to season the dinner they are cooking, but *striges* who "eat out the entrails of the living guests".[12] As we will see, the eating of entrails is one of the most common motifs in stories of the *strix*.

Concerning the second point, Christopher McDonough has suggested that the *strix* may have been envisioned as multiform: her physical form might have been assembled from several different animals, which would increase her liminality and fearsomeness.[13] In addition, the functionality of the *strix* – and of all supernatural creatures in general – as part of a living tradition relies heavily on the plasticity of her image: it must be possible to adapt to individual circumstances and experiences.[14] That is also why *strix* and her sisters are "confused" so often. The label is not important, but what you can express through the image of the child-killing being.

Pliny the Elder's third point is more puzzling; the *striges* seem to nurse the infants, rather than consume their entrails. Here the later Byzantine traditions of Gellô as mentioned by the historian and philosopher Michael Psellus (*c*. 1019–*c*. 1078), preserved in extract in Leo Allatius' (1586–1669)

work, might be of help in understanding this peculiarity: Psellus states that the reproductive demons were believed to merely pretend to nurse the child; in actuality they drained the vitality of the infants through their nipples. The same might conceivably have been thought to occur in Pliny the Elder's example.[15]

The most elaborate story of the child-killing *strix* is to be found in the Roman poet Ovid's (43 BC–AD 17) work on Roman festivals – *Fasti* – in which the attacks of the *striges* on an infant prince in his cradle furnish the explanation for the festival meal, consisting of beans and bacon, consumed on the Kalends of June (i.e., June 1st):

> There are avid birds, not those that defrauded Phineus' throat of its meals, but ones drawing their pedigree from these. Large is the head, the eyes staring, the beaks apt for rapine, their feathers are grey, hooked are their talons. They fly at night and attack children destitute of their nurse, and corrupt their bodies, which are snatched from their cradles. They are said to tear away the entrails of nursing children with their beaks, and have a gullet full of the blood they have drunk. *Strix* [screech-owl] is their name; but the reason for this name is that they usually make a dreadful, shrill noise at night. […] they came into Proca's bed-chambers. There, the child Proca, five days old, was fresh prey for the birds, and they sucked the infant's breast with avid tongues; but the unfortunate child cried and sought help.
>
> Frightened by the call of her nursling, the nurse ran to him and found his cheeks scratched by a hard talon. What should she do? The colour of his face was like that of late leaves that are damaged by recent frost. She went to Cranaë and informed her of the event. "Lay aside your fear: your nursling will be safe", she said. She came to the cradle: the mother and father were crying. "Stop your tears, I will heal him myself", she said. Immediately she touched the doorposts three times, one after the other, with arbutus leaves; three times she marked the thresholds with arbutus leaves. She sprinkled the entrance with water (and the water held a drug), and she held the raw entrails of a two-months-old sow. And she said: "Birds of night, spare the child's entrails: a small victim falls for a small child. Accept a heart for a heart, I beg you, entrails for entrails. We give you this life for a better one".
>
> When she had offered this, she placed the entrails that had been cut away in the open air, and forbade those present at the sacrifice to look back on them. A rod of Janus, of white-thorn, was set where a small window gave light to the bed-chambers. Then it is said the birds did not violate the cradle, and the colour that the boy had before returned.[16]

In this narrative, the *strix* is explicitly described as a screech-owl, which inspires dread in the hearts of mankind with its shrill cry in the dead of night. It is said to be related to the Harpies, the winged women whose very name

means "snatchers" in Greek.[17] Ovid states that the *striges* target children who are left alone in their room, without the protection of their nurse or of their parents (*puerosque petunt nutricis egentes*). They employ their beaks to tear away (*carpere*) the entrails of nursling infants (*lactentia viscera rostris*), and their gullet is full of the blood they have drunk (*plenum poto sanguine guttur*). The infant prince Proca is such a child left defenceless, and the *striges* suck at his breast: in this version, the child becomes the nurse of the *striges*, which is of course an inversion of the normal pattern, pointing to the marginal, demon-like character of the *strix*. The *striges* also leave other traces of their depredations: the cheeks of the child are scratched (*sectas … genas*), and all colour is drained from his face.

On seeing these marks, the nurse immediately understands what has happened, and seeks help from the goddess Cranaë. She was once given power over the hinges of doors and similar boundaries as compensation for a rape committed by the god Janus. At the same time, he also gave her some whitethorn "to drive away dismal harm from doors" (*tristes pellere posset a foribus noxas*).[18] She performs a rite in which she protects the doors and the thresholds with arbutus (wild strawberry-tree) leaves, and later she places whitethorn in the window to Proca's bed-chamber for the same purpose. The sacrifice of the two-month-old sow (*porca*) is intended to replace the infant Proca (the pun was intended); since his entrails were attacked, the *striges* are offered the entrails of the sow as a substitute. This kind of substitution rite was not uncommon in the Graeco-Roman world, though we generally have to turn to the Near East to find ones involving pigs.[19] In any event, the *striges* appear content with this offering, as they henceforth leave the infant alone.

As Christopher McDonough has emphasised, the distinction between inner and outer space is very important in this narrative, and it is reflected on several interconnected levels. He suggests that the house with its doors and thresholds are metaphorical equivalents of the human body, in this case the infant Proca's, for the *striges* violate the boundaries of the house in order to perform a similar violation of Proca's body.[20] In addition, since demons and witches tend to cluster around liminal spaces such as doors and thresholds, as they straddle the territory between the inside and outside of the house, controlling these spaces is crucial for preventing bodily invasion.[21] We argue that this bodily invasion itself also relies on what has been called an "open body schema", in which the boundaries of the body are construed as opening up to the influence of external forces. Thus, in an open body schema, the boundaries of the body are understood to be permeable,[22] as is evidently the case in Proca's story.

The metaphorical association between body or person and a house is expressed in a variety of ways in Roman culture. In the world of dreams, a man could be represented by his house, as Artemidorus (mid/late second century AD) states in his dream-book,[23] and Plautus makes the same point in one of his plays.[24] Lucretius (*c.* 94–55/51 BC) appeals to this analogy in describing the separation of body and soul in terms of the destruction of architectural elements: the body falls into ruins and decays, the foundations have been moved from their place, life trickles out through the limbs, through the contorted pathways of the body, and through the apertures.[25]

What the integrity of the bond of body and soul implied for Lucretius, the integrity of the boundaries of the body and house meant in Ovid's story. Cranaë seals Proca's body to external attacks by reinforcing the boundaries of the house: she separates the inside from the outside, leaving no place for such liminal creatures as the *striges*. Offering the entrails of the piglet to the *striges* in the open air, in external space, she finalises this separation. For it to remain in force, however, no one can be allowed to look back at the sacrifice.[26] The act of eating bacon (*larda*) – i.e., cured and then cooked, not raw meat – during the festival helps to protect the bowels of the participants from similar attacks and represents a rejection of the inverted, uncivilised customs of the *striges*, who eat it raw.[27]

Several other Roman stories of *striges* revolve around the integrity and vulnerability of doors; we will see a patent violation of doors in Apuleius' Aristomenes' Story in Chapter 7, and in another story in *The Golden Ass*, witches attack the doors of a house containing a corpse, as they wish to acquire body parts for their magic.[28] Common to these stories is the resolution of those hiding behind barred doors to keep them closed; opening them voluntarily is out of the question.

In a story in Petronius' *Satyrica*, the doors of a house also figure in the assault of *strigae* (Petronius uses the vulgar Latin plural form *strigae*, evidence of the narrator's humble background): they want to steal the body of a dead slave boy, and get their chance when the door is opened to let out a Cappadocian slave, who has decided to combat them. Though he manages to run one of the *strigae* through with his sword, they are too formidable, and he has to retreat indoors. When the door has been closed behind him, the horrified mother finds that the body of her son has been replaced by a small pack of straw (*manuciolum de stramentis factum*). The *strigae* have removed his heart (*cor*) and entrails (*intestina*); while the door was open, they had already succeeded in entering the house unseen, stealing him (*involaverant*) and substituting him with the straw doll (*supposuerant stramenticium vavatonem*).[29]

In the Byzantine era, attacks on doors were also attributed to Gellô; according to a story in Leo Allatius, Melitene, the sister of Saints Sisinnius and Sisynodorus, had given birth to seven children, all of which had been killed by Gelô (as her name is spelled in the story). When she was pregnant once again, she built a fortified tower in which she intended to give birth to her child, attended only by two girls. All went well until her brothers showed up; they wanted to enter the tower to visit her, and at first she refused. Finally, she gave in to their entreaties and opened the locked door for them. Unfortunately, they were not the only ones to come in; Gelô attached herself to a horse's neck, and killed the baby at night.[30] However, the saints prayed to God to be given the power to persecute Gelô, and an angel was sent to them to give them the strength to perform this task. Following her to the Libyan mountains, they eventually prevailed over her, on one condition: that they surrender to her the milk they had drunk from their own mother. Through a miracle, even this feat is achieved, and Melitene's children are returned. In addition, Gelô reveals the twelve and a half names under which she is known, and vows not to enter the home of anyone who has written them down.[31] Of the five known lists of these names, *strigla* figures in two of them;[32] in Leo Allatius, it constitutes the last, half name.[33]

5.2 Stories of Lamia

The available material on reproductive demons is often rather scant; for the most part, it consists of scattered references, in some cases mere allusions. This general observation is less true of *lamia*, however, for we possess several longer accounts of her nature and depredations. The term *lamia* refers both to a group of demons (then often mentioned in the plural as Greek *lamiai* or Latin *lamiae*)[34] and to an individual demon representing the entire group (with Lamia capitalised as a given name). The more extended narratives usually refer to the individual demon, as we will see shortly. The name itself means "devourer" in Greek, and reflects the basic action attributed to her, i.e., she is a demon that devours human flesh.[35]

In the Greek world, the stories of Lamia were incorporated into various literary accounts. The tragic playwright Euripides (480s–407/6 BC) is supposed to have placed her in Libya in a play now lost,[36] and the master of Old Comedy, Aristophanes (460/50–before 386 BC), endowed her with testicles.[37] Although the latter trait in particular has perplexed some scholars, since Lamia is most decidedly a female monster, this indeterminacy is a typical feature of the demonic or monstrous, and is found in cultures across the world.

Demons tend to be located in uncivilised space – such as the desert, forest or realm of the dead – i.e., in places distinct from the habitations of mankind.[38] Libya (varyingly meaning Cyrenaica, North Africa or even Africa) was also a land fabled for its marvels in antiquity, which was captured in the Greek proverb "Libya always produces something novel".[39] Libya was regarded as a distant realm where wonders of nature were completely natural, and Lamia fits well into this scheme of monstrous creatures. The hybrid nature of Lamia is also a common feature of demons: they often transgress the boundaries between important cultural categories, as they are frequently situated betwixt and between two categories, in this case male and female.[40] In other words, Lamia is a liminal creature in this respect.

In a work now lost, the tyrant and historian Duris of Samos (*c.* 340–*c.* 260 BC) is said to have described Lamia as a beautiful woman (*gunaika kalên*) with whom the god Zeus made love, whereupon his wife Hera in jealousy caused Lamia's children to be killed. Due to her pain she became misshapen, and snatched away the children of others to destroy them.[41] This variant of her story is the most common one in the Roman period, and her association with Libya continued.[42] A historian of the late first century BC, Diodorus Siculus, placed her squarely in a Libyan cave:

> At the base of this rock was a large cave, thickly covered with ivy and bryony, in which they recount that Queen Lamia – reputedly a beauty – had been born. Yet because of the cruelty of her soul they say that the time thereafter has transfigured her appearance to a beast-like one. As all the children born to her had died, she was heavy at heart due to her suffering and envied other women their blessing of children, and commanded that the newborn babies be torn out of their arms and immediately killed. On this account, also among us up to the present lifetime, the legend of this woman perseveres among the children, and her name is most fearful to them. Yet when she got drunk, she granted everyone freedom from fear, to do what they wished unobserved. As she was not curious then about what happened [around her], those living in the land supposed she did not see on these occasions. And because of this, some tell in the myth that she threw her eyes in a flask – making her negligence in this respect match that afforded by the wine – inasmuch as this bereaved her of her sight.[43]

Here Lamia is explicitly depicted as envious (*phthonousan*), and she kills the children of other mothers as a form of vengeance, or to assuage her own pain, as "she was heavy at heart due to her suffering". Diodorus does not say how her children died; perhaps he considered it so well known that the goddess Hera was involved in their demise that it was not worth mentioning. Alternatively, he might have encountered a slightly different variant of the story in which the

gods did not figure. Lamia's role as a bogey to be used to make children more docile is also hinted at: "also among us up to the present lifetime the legend of this woman perseveres among the children, and her name is most fearful to them".

Diodorus also reports that she sometimes drank heavily, and therefore some thought that she threw her eyes into a flask, according to Diodorus a metaphor for her negligence on these occasions.[44] The philosopher and biographer Plutarch (before AD 50–after 120) is more precise on this point and says that in the myth she stores her eyes in a jar when she is at home, sleeping in blindness, and that she puts them back in when she leaves.[45]

Heraclitus the paradoxographer (late first or second century AD) gives a different explanation: Lamia threw her eyes in a cup whenever she was seized by madness. He also states that Hera was the one to transform Lamia into a wild beast (*apethêriôsen*), and that Lamia eats flesh and human beings (*sarkophagei kai anthrôpous esthiei*). Since Heraclitus' aim is to rationalise the mythic account, he thinks Zeus was a king who slept with Lamia, and then Hera blinded her and cast her into the mountains as punishment. There she lived alone with no-one to aid her, and as she was unwashed and uncared for, she appeared to be a beast (*edokei thêrion huparkhein*).[46]

In this variant, Lamia does not limit herself to devouring children: she is willing to eat anyone, both young and old. These more omnivorous habits are quite rare in the ancient tradition, but are attested elsewhere, in a story from the Hellenistic author Boeus' (third century BC) preserved in Antoninus Liberalis (second century AD):

> By the foothills of Parnassus towards the south, there is a mountain called Cirphis, near Crisa, and there is even now an immensely great cave, where a great and monstrous beast lived. Some called it Lamia, while others called it Sybaris.
>
> Each day this beast would habitually come out and carry off herds from the fields and humans too. The Delphians already contemplated moving away, and consulted the oracle about what land they should enter. The god indicated a release from this misfortune if they stayed and were willing to set out a boy from among the citizens by the cave.
>
> They did as the god said. Casting lot, Alcuoneus, the son of Diomus and Meganira, was chosen. He was the only son of his father, and was beautiful both in appearance and in the nature of his character.
>
> Crowning Alcuoneus, the priests led him away to the cave of Sybaris. Meanwhile, by divine inspiration, Eurybatus son of Euphemus, of the race of the river Axius, a young but noble man, on coming from Curetis, happened upon the boy as he was led away.

> Stricken with love for him, and inquiring about the cause of their coming, it was dreadful not to do all in his power to defend him, but to allow the boy to be pitiably killed.
>
> Thus, stripping the garland from Alcuoneus and placing it on his own head, he ordered them to lead him forth in the boy's stead.
>
> When the priests had led him to the cave, he ran in and carried Sybaris out of her lair, and brought her out into the open, and threw her from the rocks.
>
> In falling down, she hit her head at the foot of Crisa. Due to the wound, she disappeared. From these rocks a fount sprang, and the locals call it Sybaris. The Locrians also founded a city in Italy called Sybaris after this fount.[47]

Here Lamia leaves her cave to feed on the flocks in the field, and on people too. In this respect, she is more akin to other monsters inhabiting the Greek countryside in ancient stories; this might be reflected in her less discriminate eating habits as well. Offering her a dainty young man seems to be more in accordance with Eurybatus' preferences than hers, since the sight of Alcuoneus' beauty prods him into trying to rescue him. Unlike the child-killing Lamia, this Lamia is actually defeated in a fight and subsequently disappears: after Eurybatus' feat, the inhabitants of Delphi no longer suffer from her depredations.

Whether this story represents a different line in the ancient tradition,[48] or whether her name has simply been attached to the monster otherwise called Sybaris is difficult to determine on our current evidence. However, she is not unlike the Lamia in Dio Chrysostom, analysed in Chapter 7, who also had a penchant for mature flesh. In modern Greece, a similar story of a Lamnia (the locally preferred form of her name) harassing the inhabitants of Arachova, a town situated near Delphi and Mount Parnassus, was told in the nineteenth century. The setting of the stories is thus roughly the same. Nevertheless, in the modern variant, the youth – who was the son of the elder of the community – did not need anyone else to save him; he resolutely killed the Lamnia himself.[49]

Despite her evil reputation in antiquity, the *lamia* of more recent times was generally not as formidable as she once was.[50] Depicted as stupid and ignorant, not even knowing how to heat the oven when baking bread for the dragon husband traditionally ascribed to her, she is nevertheless suitably grateful for receiving instruction in the domestic arts.[51] In some areas of Greece, only the name is remembered, while the stories have largely been forgotten.[52] Sometimes they are conflated with the nereids, a label attached to all kinds of nymphs in modern Greek tradition.[53]

5.3 Stories of Gellô and Mormô

Our sources on *gellô* and *mormô* are more limited in scope. As is the case with *lamia*/ Lamia, Gellô refers to an individual demon while *gelloudes* (sing. *gellô*) refers to a group of demons. What Gellô means in Greek is not entirely clear; the root *gel-* suggests laughter or something laughed at. Perhaps it suggests a contorted face,[54] or possibly it refers to the fact that laughter was seen as the best way of scaring away demons and monstrous apparitions.

We have the outline of Gellô's story in a comment by Zenobius on a saying from a lost poem of the early Greek poet Sappho (seventh century BC). Zenobius made a compilation of Greek proverbs in the reign of the Roman emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138), and says the following of Gellô:

> "Fonder of children than Gellô" is a saying used of those who died prematurely, or of those who are fond of children but ruin them with their upbringing. For Gellô was a virgin, and because she died prematurely, the Lesbians say that her ghost haunts little children, and they attribute premature deaths to her.[55]

Here we learn that Gellô died a virgin (*parthenos*), without having produced children of her own.[56] Sarah Iles Johnston has argued that this made her life incomplete: the ancient Greek female was fully a woman only when she had given birth and nurtured successfully. Then she had discharged her obligations to the household, but perhaps also accomplished some sense of personal fulfilment. Furthermore, dying prematurely as a virgin, Gellô was forced to wander restlessly between the world of the living and the world of the dead, since she was not permitted to reside in either. Thus, the incompleteness of her life is reflected in her incomplete status after death as a liminal creature.[57]

In the *Cyranides*, a work on the magical properties of stones, animals and plants compiled sometime in the Imperial period (probably the first or second century AD), Gellô is described as a nocturnal demon that "strangles babies and persecutes the woman in childbed".[58] Hence Gellô did not only cause the death of infants, but of parturient mothers as well. This double threat to both mother and offspring recurs in Byzantine stories of Gellô,[59] and in traditions of similar demons in the much earlier ancient Near Eastern cultures, such as Lamashtu, Lilith and Obizoth.[60] It is also visible in the protective measures against reproductive demons, which are frequently said to work for both mother and child.[61]

As in the cases of Lamia and Gellô, the name Mormô can also refer to a group of demons, then in the form of *mormones* (sing. *mormô*).[62] The name Mormô means "the fearsome one" in Greek.[63] Several versions of Mormô's

story seem to have existed. According to one, to be found in the scholiast to Aelius Aristides (AD 117–after 181), a prominent sophist and man of letters in his day, she was a woman from Corinth who committed a horrible deed:

> He [Aristides] talks about Mormô; hearing of her makes children frightened. They say she was a Corinthian woman; one evening she devoured her children with design and flew away. And hereafter, whenever the women want to frighten their children, they call upon Mormô.[64]

Like Lamia, Mormô had given birth to children, but since she did not succeed in bringing them up to maturity, she had failed as a mother. Unlike Lamia, who is somewhat excused by the fact that her children were killed by someone else (a jealous goddess), Mormô can appeal to no such mitigating circumstances. Mormô herself was the bane of her offspring, which makes her even further removed from the image of the ideal woman and mother. In this respect, she resembles Medea, who also chose to slay her own children.[65]

The scholiast refers to Mormô's function as a bug-bear as well: her name is used by women to frighten children. This function is particularly well attested for Mormô, and, as mentioned, her very name means "fearsome one" in Greek. The Hellenistic poet Theocritus (fl. 270s BC) portrays another mother scaring her child into quietude by crying: "Mormô, the horse bites!" (*Mormô, daknei hippos*),[66] and the historian Xenophon (*c*. 430–354 BC) mentions a taunt levelled by the Spartans at the Mantineans, their allies in a war, to the effect that the Mantineans feared (*phobointo*) the peltasts of the enemy in much the same way as children fear *mormones* (*hôsper mormonas paidaria*).[67] In the Roman period, the rhetorician Libanius (AD 314–*c*. 393) acidly makes reference to a governor who flees trials more than children do the *mormones* (*mallon de pheugei tas kriseis mallon ê paidia tas Mormonas*).[68] As for modern Greece, the inhabitants of Arachova still tried to frighten crying children into silence in the nineteenth century by appealing to the *moummou*, who would come to devour them if they did not stop their clamour.[69]

Plato (*c*. 429–347 BC) uses the variant form *mormolukeion* (*lukos* means wolf in Greek), in the context of a philosophical discussion on persuading our inner child not to fear death as if it were a host of *mormolukeia* (*mê dedienai ton thanaton hôsper ta mormolukeia*).[70] Thus, *mormô* was associated with wolves as in Plato, or with horses as in Theocritus; both were animals with occasionally sinister connotations. The horse was sacred to the god Poseidon, and could therefore be connected to the dark, marginal area of the sea and the destructive powers of its lord. The wolf, on the other hand, was often used as a representation of utter barbarity, the epitome of all that was uncivilised, and of inhuman conduct. Attributing these animal characteristics to Mormô,

as Sarah Iles Johnston has argued, served to accentuate her marginal status as a demon; she was a marginal being endowed with abnormal traits, which exacerbated this marginalisation.[71] One source also describes her as being ass-legged (*onoskelida*), another expression of her liminal position.[72] *Mormonas* are also glossed as wandering demons (*planêtas daimonas*), stressing their capacity to roam between the worlds of the living and the dead.[73]

Another line of the tradition turns Mormô into the queen of the Laestrygonians, the man-eating giants encountered by Odysseus on his voyage home to Ithaca.[74] Here she is identified with both Lamia and Gellô:

> [The horse] Mormô: Lamia, the queen of the Laestrygonians – she was also called Gellô – was unfortunate with regards to her children, as they had been slain, and she wished to kill the living children [of others].[75]

In general, these reproductive demons were often assimilated into each other, and to *strix* and *empousa* as well (see below and Chapter 7). Interestingly, the modern Italian counterpart to Mormô, Mammone, is a male demon, which indubitably reflects significant changes in the socio-cultural context of these beliefs; in ancient Greece and Rome, reproductive demons were invariably female.[76]

5.4 Envy and Fear

The emotion explicitly attributed to reproductive demons in the texts is that of envy (Greek *phthonos*, Latin *invidia*). In Diodorus Siculus' account, Lamia overtly "envied" (*phthonousan*) other women their blessing of children, and in a passage from the *Orphic lithica* detailing the beneficial qualities of various stones, the being attacking the child is called Megaira, "she who is envious" in Greek.[77] If we study the actions of these demons in stories not employing an emotion word associated with envy, and compare them to the definitions of the emotions given in ancient philosophy, we come to the same conclusion: their actions accord with those linked to the envious.

These creatures see others enjoying the good they have themselves been deprived of and attack them to similarly bereave them of this good. This is indeed the kind of behaviour generally linked to the envious in antiquity; since they are incapable of such achievements themselves, they seek to destroy the good fortune of others.[78] This interpretation is borne out by Roman beliefs in the destructive power of envy: in epitaphs from the Roman period, envy is sometimes blamed for a death, and in a poem by Statius (AD 45/early 50s –c. 96), Black Envy (*atra Invidia*) is exhorted to turn away her malicious breast (*alio liventia pectora flectat*) from the new-born child of a friend. The existence

of a new-born child in the family was recognised as a dangerous situation, when envy could turn her attention to the household. In another poem, Statius demonstrates that the idea of the envy of the dead was not foreign to the ancient Romans: he states that the malicious wasting away of envy is not even absent from the dead (*nec livida tabes invidiae functis … defuit*).[79]

Envy was conceived as a physically intense emotion, with patent physiological effects. It was particularly associated with the entrails: the innards of the envious were tortured by the emotion, which is once likened to a blood-stained executioner.[80] It was also compared to a bird of prey: the author of a Roman novel, Petronius (d. AD 66), depicts the vulture (*voltur*) as a personification of envy and excess:

> The vulture penetrating the innermost liver,
> And tearing out the heart and innermost nerves
> Is not what the elegant poets call [it],
> But the evils of the heart: envy and excess.[81]

The reference here is to the myth of Tityus: as punishment for a sexual assault on Leto, the mother of the deities Apollo and Artemis, his liver was attacked by two vultures in the Underworld.[82] The liver was viewed as the seat of appetites and desire,[83] which could be construed as having a natural affinity with envy and excess (*livor atque luxus*).

Those afflicted by envy were also thought to waste away: they become emaciated.[84] Envy is a wasting poison that "devours the marrow but leaves the bones intact, and drinks all the blood from the limbs".[85] The poisonous nature of envy is a prominent feature of Ovid's magnificent description of personified envy, Invidia, in another work, the *Metamorphoses*: when she is recruited by the goddess Minerva to punish the girl Aglauros for exposing Minerva's secrets, Invidia breathes a baneful venom into her bones, and disseminates pitch-black poison inside her lungs (*piceumque… medio spargit pulmone venenum*).[86] In addition to emaciation, the envious are also characterised by pallor (*pallor in ore sedet*); both traits were construed as a result of envy eating them away from within.[87] The most commonly cited physiological effects of envy are otherwise the feeling of being choked (*angens utraque manu sua guttura Livor*),[88] and of bursting with envy.[89]

The correspondences in imagery between descriptions of envy and the narratives of child-killing demons seem to us quite striking: although they are far from calques on each other, they draw on similar images to convey their message. In the following discussion, we focus on the *strix*, as we have more evidence from the Roman period on the perceived results of her ravages than we do on those of the other demons.[90] Thus, just as the innards of the envious

were being consumed by envy, so the innards of the victims of the *strix* are torn away by this malicious being. The *strix* itself also takes the form of a bird of prey, a screech-owl, just as envy is likened to a vulture.

The alarming pallor on the child Proca's face might perhaps be taken as indicative of emaciation, just as the envious are pallid and emaciated. Similarly, the poison of envy drinks all the blood from the limbs of the envious, just as the *striges* have a gullet full of blood. The child-killing demons do not infuse poison into their victims, as envy does in the envious, but their attack is just as surreptitious, and equally dangerous. Proca was lucky enough to survive, but many of his fellow victims were not. Yet the blackness of the poison does have a counterpart in the colour of the *strix* itself, which was described as black.[91] The act of eating away from within, which is attributed to both envy and the *strix*,[92] is another feature held in common. Hence, the extent to which the *strix* is a personification of envy has not been properly appreciated.[93]

In the scholarly study of Greek and Roman conceptions of envy, the difference between a morally inflected envy (the "righteous indignation" [*nemesan*] of Aristotle, 384–322 BC) and an envy untouched by that kind of moral thrust (*phthonos*) is often stressed. In Greek, these two types of envy bore different names, whereas in Latin *invidia* covered both forms.[94] We also have that third emotion, the positive sort of envy that is usually translated as emulation (Greek *zêlos*).[95]

Robert Kaster discriminates between four basic thoughts – or cultural scripts – in Roman notions of *invidia*. The first two approximate the Greek concept of *phthonos*, while the latter two are more similar to *nemesis*. If we are to believe Diodorus Siculus, Lamia's depredations would fall in with either script one or script two: either she envies other women their blessing with children because having children is an a priori good in itself, or because it is a good that somehow naturally belongs to these other women as specific individuals and not to her, without appeal to any notion of what is "right".[96] This is what his use of *phthonousan* suggests.

However, we argue that it is not possible to fully understand the actions of these reproductive demons without taking a principle of "right" or fairness into account. They attack the children of other women, and the women themselves in vulnerable situations, precisely because they feel that they should be entitled to the same good. This would make their envy a form of *nemesan*, righteous indignation. Hence, we suggest that the behaviour of these demons actually fits better into the third script: begrudging someone a good because it is perceived as rightfully your own.[97]

In the Graeco-Roman world, envy had a strong connection with inactivity: idle individuals were viewed as more prone to envy than others,

as they were incapable of channelling their energies usefully, i.e. into emulating the accomplishments of those they envied, into the third kind of envy.[98] Elsewhere, Ovid called envy (*livor*) "a sluggish vice" (*iners vitium*).[99] Child-killing demons also suffer from this sluggishness, but in their case it is an imposed idleness: since they are dead, they are physically incapable of emulating those they envy by conceiving and fostering children themselves. This might perhaps be less true of the child-killing *strix*, who does possess a physical form. However, since witches were often imagined to be older women, they might be viewed as past childbearing age (see Chapter 7.1).

If envy was the emotion harboured by the reproductive demons in Roman beliefs, fear was the one afflicting potential victims. The very names of several of these demons were etymologically related to fear, and fear is the emotion explicitly evoked in some of the texts: "all nocturnal terror and Gellô" are mentioned in conjunction in one of them,[100] and fear was the common response of children to the stories of Lamia and Mormô.

The emotion of fear is a reaction to imminent danger threatening to cause great destruction or pain to oneself or one's own, as Aristotle tells us,[101] and the death of a child or young woman causes both great destruction and great pain (the idea that the ancients did not care if their children died is not embraced in recent research on the subject).[102] The approaching dangers he discusses are virtually all the result of human ill-will, but since demons were endowed with the same capacity for agency – or perhaps an increased one in some respects – in popular thought,[103] his arguments are pertinent to them as well. Thus, he considered it prudent to fear those showing enmity and anger, and that are in a position to inflict harm on us, because they are just waiting for an opportunity to strike.

Envy and enmity are often conjoined: in Statius' poem, Invidia had a "malicious breast" (*liventia pectora*), for example. Unlike our enmity, which is commonly understood as rather passive, enmity in the ancient world involved an element of active ill-will that is evident in Aristotle as well: the envious do not only loathe the objects of their envy, they actively wish them harm; this is why they are always ready to strike.[104] Furthermore, if envy was indeed perceived as more or less permeating society, as has sometimes been claimed,[105] the risk of inspiring envy during important transitions in the life cycle is likely to have been experienced as both considerable and acute.

However, there were ways to protect infants and young women. Amber was the best protection in the home generally, says one source, but in particular it was so for "both pregnant women and infants so that they do not fear" (*praegnantibus et infantibus ne timeant*).[106] Galactite could be hung around the neck of the child, to keep it away from the two eyes of the ill-contriving

Megaira, or to protect against all envy (*apeirgei panta phthonon*) and keep the child healthy and unaffected by maleficence. Incidentally, it could be drunk in pulverised form to aid lactation in women, and be bound in the wool of a fecund sheep to the right thigh of a woman experiencing a difficult labour.[107]

5.5 The Family: Death and Survival

In Roman culture, the purpose of marriage was the production of legitimate children, as an overwhelming amount of evidence suggests.[108] At the census, for example, Roman heads of households (*patresfamilias*) vowed that they had a family expressly for the purpose of procreation, and the household itself was perceived as the seed-bed of the state.[109] In this context, it is important to remember that the Roman household (*domus*) did not only include the nuclear family, but occasionally other close paternal kin, slaves and freed and free dependents.[110]

For the family itself, children were thought to ensure the survival of the family name, and bestowed an immortality of sorts on the parents.[111] Especially since at least one son bore exactly the same names as the father and grandfather, the continuity of the family name was manifested in an unusually profound fashion in Roman culture.[112] The thought of living on in the child, on the other hand, is well illustrated in a speech held by the emperor Augustus (reigned 27 BC–AD 14) to those members of the Senate who had chosen to bring up children, and thus contribute to the maintenance of the state:

> How could it not be sweet to raise up a child from the ground that has grown out of the two of you [husband and wife], to feed and teach it, an image of your body as well as your soul, so that, growing up, another self comes into being? How could it not be the greatest blessing, on departing from this life, to leave behind a successor and heir of the house, born from yourself both to your family and to your estate; and only your human nature dissolves while you live on in this child as your successor, and you will neither fall into the hands of strangers as in warfare, nor pass away into extinction.[113]

The importance of having an heir born of one's own flesh is emphasised, and this seems to have been a common sentiment in Graeco-Roman culture. Philodemus of Gadara (*c.* 110–*c.* 40/35 BC) took some pains to argue against this view in his *On Death* (see Chapter 4.2), where he ridicules the childless man who is unwilling to leave his property to inheritors outside the family, and points out that these individuals could well be more worthy of inheriting than a wayward child.[114] This suggests that the fear of "falling into the hands of strangers" was quite deeply rooted in Roman culture; the passage

from Philodemus referred to above also mentions a loathing of bequeathing property even to distant relatives. The former fear was not unfounded; childless individuals could be courted by so-called legacy-hunters, who ingratiated themselves with their targets in order to be included in their wills.[115] A sense of vulnerability was therefore attendant on reaching old age without children, and the risk of dispersing property outside the family ran against Roman sensibilities.[116]

The act of raising the new-born child from the ground alluded to in the first sentence of the Dio Cassius (*c.* AD 164–after 229) quote cited above was part of the ritual performed immediately after birth, and it was connected to inheritance. It is believed that the midwife placed the baby on the ground after inspecting it for physical deformities, and the father then picked it up as a sign that he accepted it into the family, and as his heir.[117] It was part of the father's supreme power over his family (*patria potestas*) to decide whether a child was to be raised up from the ground or not.[118]

Having children was thus understood as a way of ensuring support in old age, as children were expected to care for their aged parents as recompense for the nurture they had received in their infancy and childhood.[119] This view is clearly made manifest in the work of Quintilian (*c.* AD 35–*c.* 100), who was deeply affected by being bereft of both his young wife and his two sons:

> For I lost him, for whom I had entertained such high hopes, and in whom rested the only hope of my old age, as bereavement struck me a blow once again.[120]

Estimations of mortality rates in infancy and childhood in ancient Rome tend to land somewhere around 50 per cent before the age of ten.[121] Since the mortality rates were so high, the risk of losing several children was very tangible.[122] Thus, in order to have two children surviving into adulthood, each mother had to give birth to five or six children, excluding the stillborn.[123]

In the wake of Philippe Ariès' influential *Centuries of Childhood*, many argued that the ancient Romans, like their counterparts in other pre-industrial societies with similar mortality rates, did not allow themselves to grow attached to infants and young children. This would be in order to avoid the distress that the virtually inevitable loss of one or more of them would result in; in other words, demography would pre-determine emotional response.[124] As cross-cultural comparison rather seems to suggest the opposite, that infants in societies suffering from high infant mortality receive constant attention and affection, this argument has since been rejected.[125]

Most Roman girls probably entered their first marriage in their late teens, and men in their late twenties; in elite circles, the age at marriage could

be considerably lower, 12–15 years for girls and the early twenties for men (the legal minimum age for marriage was 12 for girls and 14 for boys).[126] Since men normally married some ten years later than women, they were generally less dependent on the support of their children in old age, for the simple reason that most of them died before the children reached 30 years of age; only some 20 per cent had a living father at this age. Hence the husband could depend on the care and comfort of his much younger wife while he lived, while the wife was more in need of the support of children. This might have made childbearing more important for women, to ensure support in old age.[127]

Girls in ancient Rome appear to have reached menarche at around 14 years of age,[128] and it is also from this age that the prominent medical writer Soranus of Ephesus (fl. *c*. AD 98–138) recommends marriage and intercourse. Prior to this, the womb was not ready for childbirth, and the danger to the woman in labour was great:

> It is expedient to maintain them in virginity to such a point that menstruation begins by itself. For this will be a sure sign that the womb is already capable of performing its proper actions, one of which is also conception, as we said before. For danger arises when the injected seed is conceived while the womb is small in size...[129]

Even though some physicians such as Soranus recognised the dangers involved in giving birth before the body was fully developed, early marriage was to some extent considered ideal, as it allowed girls to enter it with their bodies and minds pure and intact.[130] Maternal mortality rates are difficult to estimate, but it has been proposed that the ancient Roman rate approximates that of eighteenth-century rural England, with a maternal mortality rate of 25 deaths per 1,000 births.[131]

Barrenness in a woman could be adduced as a cause for divorce, although this was not viewed as wholly irreproachable conduct:[132] in accounts of the first known divorce for infertility in Roman history, that of Spurius Carvilius in 230 BC, this act earned him much hatred and condemnation. He justified himself by appealing to the oath he had to make to the censors, saying that he could not honestly pledge that his marriage was for the purpose of procreation if his wife was barren.[133] For the wife branded as sterile, the social consequences were grave: she was in effect socially dead, and ceased to have a role in the family and the state.[134] These consequences were sometimes mitigated by the rapid subsequent remarriage of the husband, which gave scope for speculation

about the real motives behind the divorce; these suspicions might have worked in favour of the wife, and increased her chances of remarrying.[135]

5.6 Externalising Threat and Blame, and Mental Preparation for Future Ills

Sarah Iles Johnston has suggested that these demons functioned as scapegoats when sudden deaths occurred in the family.[136] In an age characterised by high infant mortality and the unavailability of modern-day medication, blaming a supernatural creature outside the family averted the socially disruptive consequences of imputing blame to family members, or accusing neighbours of witchcraft.[137] Consequently, explanations for such deaths were very much needed, and we believe that these stories could have had therapeutic functions as well.

Yet how can stories of such dreadful creatures possibly be therapeutic, especially if they were utilised to frighten children? In order to argue this point, we turn to ancient therapies of the emotions on the one hand, and contemporary narrative therapy on the other, a form of family therapy developed in the early 1980s by Michael White and David Epston.[138]

As mentioned above, Gellô was labelled a nocturnal "terror",[139] and the very name Mormô meant "fearsome one".[140] In philosophy, an interesting observation concerning the nature of fear was made by Diogenes of Oenoanda (fl. second century AD), an adherent of the Epicurean school. Diogenes makes a distinction between two types of fear (see Chapter 4.2). The first has a clear object; as an example, he mentions the fear of fire, which induces us to avoid fire in order to escape death. The second kind of fear has an indefinite object, and it creeps upon us when our thoughts are occupied with something else. It can also be prompted by imaginary threats.[141]

David Konstan has argued that most people tend to view these indefinite fears not as the figments of the imagination that they really are, but as a fear of things that truly exist and that can inflict real harm on us. Thus, we mistake this indefinite fear for fear of objective dangers, and behave as if this fear could be dispelled simply by avoiding those dangers.[142] Implicitly, this tendency is evaluated negatively, as it involves some kind of self-delusion.

We would like to turn this argument on its head and suggest that it is precisely this process of turning an indefinite fear into a definite one that constitutes its therapeutic potential. If we combine this process with that of scapegoating, in which blame for sudden death is displaced onto demons

external to the family, we recognise a process that partially resembles that of externalising the problem, or naming the plot, in modern narrative therapy.

Although there are obvious differences between ancient and modern procedures, they share certain characteristics that might make it easier to discern the therapeutic features of scapegoating. Both do in some sense impute blame for a problem to an external entity: in ancient Greece and Rome to the various incarnations of the child-killing demon, in modern narrative therapy to personifications of the problem, or at least named problems.[143] Giving the problem a name is very important in narrative therapy, since it enables us to recognise the problem for what it is, and even more crucially, for what it does to us and to our relationships with others.

Narrative therapy rests on the assumption that we make sense of our experiences by narrating them, and that we feel dissatisfied with our lives when the stories we – or others – tell about ourselves do not sufficiently reflect our lived experience. Drawing on Michel Foucault's discussions of the intertwining of power, knowledge and truth, the poor fit between story and experience is understood as a result of living according to a dominant story, a story that is not our own. Thus, change can be effected through a reauthoring of our lives and relationships.[144]

The aim of therapy is to identify so-called unique outcomes, which are aspects of lived experience that fall outside the dominant story. This identification is assisted by the technique of the externalisation of the problem, which allows a separation of the individual from the "problem-saturated" story. Rather than locating the problem firmly within the person, the distance created through this procedure gives leeway for examining the influence of the problem on one's life, and for seeing alternatives to this problem-oriented description of life and experience. It also has an empowering effect, endowing the individual with a sense of personal agency, rather than of being trapped by the problem. It has been said that "[t]o name is to regain a little control; naming is taking the initiative, imposing a chosen identity on something, or someone, threatening".[145]

Some forms of externalisation are particularly powerful, and this is when the problem is not merely externalised, but also personified. Sometimes therapy clients have received a medical diagnosis before entering therapy, but naming the problem in experience-near terms can still be vital, especially in work with children. Michael White did pioneering work on externalisation with children in which the problem could receive rather colourful names, such as "Sneaky Poo" and "Mr Mischief",[146] although many are more conventional. The following example is drawn from White's work with externalising conversations with children suffering from encopresis or soiling:

> M[ichael White]: What would you say about the nature or the character of an encopresis that went around messing up people's lives when it wasn't invited to do so? What would you say about an encopresis that caused these sorts of slip-ups and made it difficult to get things done?
>
> Sue: Well, I'd say it was an encopresis who was up to mischief.
>
> Rod: I'd say that too.
>
> M: What would you say, Spencer?
>
> Spencer: Let's see. Yep, I'd say that.
>
> M: What would you say, Spencer?
>
> Spencer: It's Mr. Mischief.
>
> M: Okay, so it's Mr. Mischief! It's really good to know this!
>
> Spencer: Sure is![147]

White invites the family – mother, father and son – to characterise the problem based on its actions, and to give it a name, Mr. Mischief. This makes the problem more tangible, and the name captures the characteristic effect of the problem: its depredations result in mischief being done to the family. Personifying the problem makes it easier for the family to take action to thwart these effects, since it creates a distance to the problem that allows them to reflect on its nature and influence on their lives. With regards to the ancient Roman stories, personifying the dangers to the life of family members as child-killing demons served to externalise both threat and blame, in a form "recognised by other members of … society". As creatures residing outside the household, and even outside the human community, they were ideal carriers of the burden of envy, an emotion that was perceived as potentially lethal for its victim.[148]

Yet, as we saw above, families were not wholly surrendered to the ravages of these child-killing demons; there were ritual actions that could be taken to counteract their influence. These actions would constitute the individual's effect on the life of the problem, as people were attempting to minimise its effects. Though their efficacy on mortality rates can indubitably be doubted from a modern point of view, they might have been experienced as empowering in the ancient context, as they fostered hope.[149]

An orthodox application of narrative therapy would also focus on the cultural narratives imposing themselves on people's lives. In our case, this would mean questioning the fairness of the social expectations on women's reproductive responsibilities, and women's being defined and honoured solely on the basis of their fertility. As far as we can tell, the stories we study do not appear to have filled this function, though they do speak volumes on the potentially disastrous effects of such cultural values: if the child-killing demons thought themselves entitled to be righteously indignant at being

denied having and raising children, this is because they feel defrauded of the possibility to live up to these values.

We also believe that these stories of child-killing demons could have functioned as a kind of mental preparation for future ills. The Cyrenaic school of philosophy pioneered a practice called pre-rehearsal, which implied developing resilience to misfortunes by consciously foreseeing and contemplating them. As discussed in Chapter 4.3, the Cyrenaics were an early Hellenistic philosophical school founded by Aristippus of Cyrene (*c.* 435–355 BC) who claimed that pleasure was the goal of life. They also held that it was specifically unforeseen and unanticipated misfortune that gave rise to distress.[150] Though the notion that unexpectedness was the only cause of distress was challenged by followers of other schools, the practice of pre-rehearsal itself was also adopted by others, especially the Stoics (we will encounter it again in Chapter 9). Cicero (106–43 BC) mentions the practice in his *Tusculan Disputations*:

> Thus, although this one thing [i.e., unexpected misfortune] alone does not produce the greatest distress, nevertheless, as mental foresight and preparation avails much to diminish the pain, a human being should always contemplate all events of life. And without doubt, this constitutes pre-eminent and divine wisdom: both to thoroughly comprehend and deal with human events; to be surprised by nothing when it occurs; and, before it has happened, to think everything could happen.[151]

In glossing this passage, Cicero makes a distinction between three sources and methods of consolation, of which one interests us here. Cicero says that pre-rehearsal enables us to realise that misfortunes are part of the human condition, and that enduring them is also human. Thus, when we need to offer consolation to a person in distress, we can appeal to this notion of misfortune as integral to human life by offering consolation through positive examples. These examples involve individuals who have suffered similar misfortunes and showed endurance, and serve to prove that the events causing distress actually are tolerable, since others have managed to endure them. Hence, the examples are intended to encourage the individual to bear his misfortunes with composure and fortitude.[152] In *The Tusculan Disputations* Cicero discussed men – models of Republican morality – who did not grieve the deaths of their children, since they believed it unmanly and thus inappropriate (see Chapter 4.3).[153]

The stories of these men provide models that the individual can adopt in dealing with his own distress; they were all heroes of the Republic and could hence be regarded as role models more generally. The stories also suggest a therapy, though it might not be one to modern liking. Nowadays, not grieving

the death of your child at all would probably be regarded as excessively callous, if not outright pathological. However, if Cicero, and the Stoic philosophers on whom he draws, were correct in the assertion that belief is constitutive of emotion, the lack of belief in the distressing nature of these events might be therapeutic.

In modern interpretations of pre-rehearsal, it has sometimes been stressed that the main purpose of imagining losing you child, for example, would not be to produce an unfeeling automaton, but to restrict the extent to which we take those individuals and things we cherish for granted. Pre-rehearsal would be a bulwark against our tendency to postpone showing our affection for loved ones for another day, when we are less occupied with our all-too-important business. It would make us value them more if we acknowledge the thought that some day, they will not be there for us.[154]

However, our stories – and Cicero's account of them – also furnish models for a more general use of stories for therapeutic ends, as they provide models of self-healing. Transferred to the case of stories of child-killing demons, the therapeutic model advanced in them is one of healing trauma through externalisation. Thus, the stories of child-killing demons could have functioned as a kind of instruction manual for dealing emotionally with such events. They gave an explanation for deaths that had occurred, but also enabled preparation for such events by giving the opportunity to guard against them, using the stones, minerals and other magical ingredients described earlier. Mental preparation involves not only resignation to the grievous lot of humanity, but active measures of protection as well.

6 The Negligent Nurse

The Monkey Babysitter and Other Careless Child-Minders

In Ovid's (43 BC–AD 17) story of the *striges* attacking the infant Proca (see Chapter 5.1), we already encountered a motif that is common to all narratives discussed in this chapter: the child left alone without supervision. Indeed, the very plot of Ovid's story hinges on this fact, that the child is sleeping unattended in his cradle: otherwise the *striges* might have been prevented from violating him. The absence of his nurse is emphasised in the text as she is said to run into his chamber only after hearing his cries for help. By then, the damage has been done, and she must seek Cranaë's help to heal the child. It is also apparent that Proca's parents were not there to supervise him;[1] it is the nurse, not the parents, who hears the baby's cries and takes action to save him by asking for Cranaë's assistance. This reflects the widespread use of wet-nurses and nursemaids as child-minders during the first years of a child's life, both in the higher and lower strata of Roman society (see below).[2]

Entrusting the care of one's child to someone else in this way was not without its anxieties, however, as the stories discussed in this chapter suggest. Unlike the witches in Ovid's story, the culprit harming a child in the other narrative covered here was an animal, an ape.[3] In both cases, the death, or near death, of the child is said to occur when the nurse is occupied elsewhere, leaving her nursling unguarded. Parents' fear that a nurse would fail in her work surfaces in a similar form in other ancient stories as well, but we have chosen not to discuss them here as primary source material due to their more pronounced literary character in the Roman context. We will mention one of them briefly, however, to indicate that the theme is not exclusive to our stories.

The tragic story of Hypsipyle and her royal nursling Opheltes/Archemorus treats the same topic.[4] In many variants of the narrative, which is well-attested in both Greek[5] and Roman[6] sources, the infant prince is killed by a monstrous sacred snake in Nemea, while Hypsipyle is occupied with assisting or chatting with a number of heroes, the Seven against Thebes, leaving her charge unattended for a while.[7] In honour of the dead child, the renowned Nemean games were instituted.[8] Since the Seven against Thebes were preparing for war, the child's demise was interpreted as a bad omen, and Hypsipyle herself was often threatened by capital punishment for her

inattention. Just how negligent she was actually thought to be remains open to debate, as the texts are not entirely clear on this point, though the view that this story and others like it are expressions of parental fears and guilt at the death of children is less controversial.[9] We will advance a similar argument regarding our narratives, beginning with the story of the monkey babysitter.

6.1 The Story of the Monkey Babysitter

The story of the monkey babysitter is to be found in a passage in the Roman author Aelian's (165/170–230/235 AD) book *On the Nature of Animals*. The purpose of this work appears to have been to demonstrate the reality of divine providence in the realm of animals, but it is more a collection of stories illustrating the wonders of the world, often with a moral message. In this respect, the present story is quite typical:

> Therefore, the ape is the most malicious of animals, and even more so in its attempts to mimic man. For example, [an ape] happened to see a nurse washing a little child in a tub – itself remaining unobserved – and first she took off the swaddling-clothes, and then cooped the child up after the bath. Then the ape watched narrowly as the nurse put the child to rest, and seeing that the place was abandoned, it leapt through an open window from which it had seen everything at a glance. The ape lifted the child up from the bed and stripped it naked as it had chanced to see done; as water was being heated on the hot embers, [the ape] poured it over the unlucky child, and of course killed it pitiably.[10]

The passage opens with an evaluation of the events in the narrative:[11] they exemplify the utter malignity of the ape, which is "the most malicious of animals", and the main problem with the ape is identified – it is its capacity to imitate man, which renders it so dangerous. For even though it can mimic human actions, it cannot emulate human thought processes, and fails to foresee and comprehend the perils of its behaviour. The ape is a fake, and a dire one to boot.

The minute observation of the actions of the nurse is part of the ape's ability to imitate man. The nurse, for her part, is just performing the duties expected of her. In addition to breastfeeding the baby, one of her principal tasks was to bathe, massage and swaddle it. Infants in Rome were swaddled right from birth, after being cleaned with salt, and remained swaddled for the next forty or sixty days to prevent malformation of the limbs. The child was then re-swaddled after each bath.[12] The window affording the ape its full view and entrance into the baby's bedchamber is probably open to regulate the

temperature of the room; the ancients were well aware of the importance of a cool sleeping environment to promote infant health.[13] The water being heated on the hot embers, which is seized by the ape to "bathe" the baby once more, is likely to be on standby for a variety of purposes, as in any household lacking the comfort of a modern electric or gas stove; since bringing water to a boil is so time-consuming, having a pot ready is highly efficient.

As far as we know, this is the only extant variant of what we propose to regard as an ancient "contemporary" legend. Its basic plot, with due regard for variations deriving from a different historical and cultural context, resembles that of the contemporary legend "The Hippie Baby-sitter", which started circulating in the United States and Canada around 1970. In this well-known story, parents entrust their infant to a babysitter who proves utterly unreliable; she is often said to be high on drugs and mistakes the baby for a turkey, as in the following variant from New York State:

> This couple with a teenage son and a little baby left the baby with this hippie-type girl who was a friend of the son's. They went to a dinner party or something, and the mother called in the middle of the evening to see if everything was all right.
>
> "Sure", the girl says. "Everything's fine. I just stuffed the turkey and put it in the oven".
>
> "Well, the lady couldn't remember having a turkey, so she figured something was wrong. She and her husband went home, and they found that the girl had stuffed the baby and put it in the oven. Now the son used a lot of drugs, and this girl was a friend of his, so I guess they figure she took them too. … This is a true story. We had a meeting at school, and this psychologist told the story. I think he said that it happened to a friend's neighbour.[14]

It is of course no coincidence that this legend gained currency in the wake of more liberal attitudes to substance use in the Flower Power movement, and of growing awareness of the drawbacks of this use.[15] A common practice of hiring babysitters from outside the extended family is also a prerequisite for this version of the plot, where the background and habits of the would-be babysitter have not been investigated in sufficient detail. Implicitly, the parents might even be construed as naïve or simple-minded, if they did not understand that hiring a friend of a drug-abusing son, as in this variant of the legend, would inevitably lead to disaster. In other parts of the world, the cast of characters and their roles have been adapted to local circumstances.

For instance, in Scandinavia it is usually the mother who – under the influence of a serious post-partum depression or excessive medication at the hospital – roasts the baby in the oven.[16] There it is still unusual to entrust the care of such a young infant as the plot actually demands to anyone other than

a grandparent, and although drug abuse was a problem in the 1980s when the legend was in its heyday, it was not widespread enough to be entirely plausible in a Scandinavian context.

The ancient Romans would probably have considered the story of the ape relatively plausible; Aelian himself seems to entertain no doubts about its authenticity. The ape would have been assumed to be a pet, as monkeys and apes were quite common pets both among children[17] and adults,[18] and among people from all walks of life, from royalty[19] to the butcher.[20] The presence of the nurse is, as indicated above and explored in more detail below, wholly conventional as well; seeing the mother in this role might actually have been more surprising in a Roman context.

As is the case with many narratives in the ancient sources constituting analogues to our own contemporary legends, this story has received very little attention from classical scholars. However, William Coffman McDermott discussed it in *The Ape in Antiquity* (1938), where he mentions it as an example of the idea of the evil nature of the ape. He judges that the story had a real basis, but objects to Aelian's notion that this was a customary action of the ape, and that it was due to its evil nature.[21]

We prefer to keep the question of the story's veracity open, and merely wish to point to the fact that a common feature of contemporary legends is precisely their plausibility: it is conceivable that these things could have happened, sometime somewhere. More importantly, however, the legends we embrace as true or believable also have a tendency to confirm our prejudices,[22] and this does indeed appear to be one of the functions of Aelian's narrative: the story probably appealed to Aelian because it could be used to confirm his view of the ape as an evil creature.

In order to understand this story and its implications, it is necessary to delve more deeply into what the ape and the wet-nurse represented in ancient thought. Without this knowledge, the text is hardly more than a brief summary of a plot, since the cultural associations engendered by the narrative remain implicit. The rich cultural meanings of the story emerge only when we excavate the symbolic meanings of these figures. We will begin with conceptions of the ape, and then move on to ancient Roman views on wet-nurses.

6.2 Apes in Ancient Thought

In ancient thought, the ape was viewed with ambivalence.[23] On the one hand, it was regarded as an intelligent animal,[24] and on the other as a dupe.[25] As evidence for the former view, Pliny the Elder (AD 23/24–79) adduced, in

treating the different species of apes in his encyclopaedia, that one Mucianus had asserted that the tailed apes could play at draughts, and that they could immediately discriminate between a real nut and one made of wax.[26] The ability of the ape to learn tricks was widely commented on. The satirist Lucian (b. *c*. AD 120) describes apes successfully performing the Pyrrhic dance, until a spectator throws some nuts onto the stage, and they make a mad run for the food.[27] Apes were also said to be able to play instruments, such as the flute and the harp, and to walk on ropes. Juvenal (fl. AD 110–130/later) mentions an ape wearing a helmet and shield, hurling its spear while riding on the back of a goat by the Servian Wall in the city of Rome; he also states that its primary incentive to learn was the threat of beatings.[28] Moreover, the ape was capable of evading javelins, and of practising archery.[29]

The ape was also associated with trickery and deceit, which is particularly clear in terms of abuse; the epithet "ape" was often applied to people who were perceived as mischievous and deceitful.[30] In a fragment of Phrynichus (fl. *c*. 434–*c*. 405 BC), the Athenian comic poet, for example, four men were abused as "great apes" (*megalous pithêkous*), one being ignoble, the second a flatterer and the third spurious – he pretended to be an Athenian but was actually a foreigner.[31] In classical Greece, the notion of the deceitful ape was often connected to sycophancy as well, the wilful prosecution of other citizens for personal gain or aggrandizement.[32] Aristophanes (460/450–before 386 BC), the comic playwright, likened a sycophant to an ape full of mischief.[33]

The ape as dupe is primarily a creature of fable, where it is contrasted to the wily fox. In one fable, the fox envied the ape that had been elected king by the other animals. The fox found a trap rigged with meat, and lured the ape into it. When the ape complained that he had been tricked by the fox, the fox derided the ape's lack of intelligence, and questioned its ability to rule.[34]

Furthermore, the ape was construed as ugly and ridiculous. The Greek iambic poet Semonides of Amorgos (seventh century BC) presented nine types of women created from various animals and mud; the only good woman was the one created from the bee, whereas the worst was the woman created from the ape. She was ugly and laughable, as well as selfish and evil.[35] Plutarch (before AD 50–after 120) contended that the lot of the ape was to bear insolence, buffoonery and childish play. It had to stand being an instrument of laughter, as it could not be used to do any real work as the dog, horse or ox did. In this sense, it was much like the flatterer, who was useless in any serious pursuit, but extremely helpful in anything that was vicious.[36] Once again, the ugliness imputed to the ape is seen in terms of abuse applied to humans. In a fragment of Menander (342/341–292/291 BC), the master of New Comedy, an old man calls his ugly wife "an ass among apes",[37] and in a play by the

Roman comic playwright Plautus (fl. *c.* 205–184 BC), a slave calls the ugly maidservant of a beautiful mistress "little ape" (*pithecium*).[38]

The notion that the ape was an evil animal, as Aelian suggests in his remark on the story, is actually encountered quite rarely, and chiefly in late sources.[39] However, the ape recurs as an evil omen both in stories of oracles and in Plautine comedies, and dreaming of apes was generally not to be taken as a good sign. Before two important historical events, the battles of Leuctra in 371 BC and of Actium in 31 BC, the Spartans[40] and Mark Antony[41] respectively consulted oracles to try to determine the fated course of events. In both cases, the procedure was disturbed by an ape, and this was interpreted as a bad omen.[42]

In two of Plautus' plays, a character dreams of an ape, and in both instances, it was interpreted as an evil portent. In *The Merchant*, the old master of the house dreams of buying a beautiful kid (representing his son's mistress) and hands her over to an ape (his ugly but friendly neighbour). The ape's wife is highly displeased with this arrangement, and the ape blames the old master for his domestic troubles. Eventually, a young buck (the son) abducts the beautiful kid. Here the ape is explicitly labelled a bad omen.[43] In *The Rope*, the ape in the dream represents a cruel pimp, who tries to kidnap two swallows from their nest (two Athenian girls). The dreamer eventually manages to capture the ape, which is described as "the vilest of beasts" (*nequissima bestia*).[44] Similarly, just before emperor Nero's (reigned AD 54–68) death, he was upset by an ominous dream in which one of his favourite horses received the hindquarters of an ape.[45] More generally, dreaming of an ape signified a crafty and wizard-like man.[46]

Regardless of whether Aelian's attribution of malignity to the ape was crucial to the story in antiquity or not, the narrative itself relies on the ability of apes to mimic man.[47] This fact was commented on in many different contexts, and some of them have already been mentioned: the apes performing dances and tricks naturally do so by imitating human teachers, for instance. The ape's imitation of man was also an important topic in fables. In one fable, the ape imitated fishermen, but got entangled in the fishing nets:

> The Ape and the Fisherman
>
> An ape sitting in a high tree saw some fishermen casting a net in the river and watched what they were doing. Later, when the fishermen had drawn in their net and were eating their meal a short distance away, the ape climbed down and tried to do for himself what he had seen the fishermen do. Taking hold of the net, he soon became entangled in it and said to himself: "This is what I deserve to suffer; why should I try practising the fisherman's art, which is something I never learned?"[48]

This story represents a reversal of Aelian's, in the sense that it is the ape who comes to grief, not a human character. In another fable, the apes discussed founding a city – in imitation of man – but were dissuaded by an old ape, which pointed out that they would be easier to capture within the confines of a city wall.[49]

Significantly in the present context, apes were also said to be utterly affectionate towards their offspring, but to horrible effect, as the fabulist Babrius (fl. second century AD) tells us:

> The female monkey brings forth two young ones, but having borne them she is not an equal mother; one of them she wretchedly, inflamed with good-will, throttles with her savage embraces, the other she throws out as redundant and trifling. That one will survive, after going into isolation.[50]

This notion of the violent affection of the female ape for her offspring is also mentioned by others.[51] Apparently, the female ape is not particularly trustworthy in her relation to children, of whatever species.

6.3 The Wet-Nurse – Symbolic Comforter Figure vs. Object of Anxiety

Let us now turn to the role and image of the wet-nurse in Roman culture. The insistence with which some male authors and members of the elite championed maternal breastfeeding suggests that it was rare among upper-class women at least in their own day. In Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Elder*, for example, it is specifically mentioned that his wife nursed their son herself, and that she also breastfed the babies of their slaves, to create a bond of affection between them. Cato the Elder (234–149 BC) himself was always present when his wife bathed and swaddled their son, unless he had very pressing public responsibilities.[52] This is cited as an example of his unusual rectitude in dealing with family matters, and is elevated as an ideal rather than presented as the common state of affairs. Similarly, the historian Tacitus (*c.* AD 55– *c.* 120) lets a character in *A Dialogue on Oratory* attribute the contemporary decline of oratory to the employment of "some little Greek maid-servant" and the most useless slave of the household as child-minders, in contrast to the old days, when mothers raised their children in their own lap, and had some control over their upbringing.[53]

The sophist and philosopher Favorinus' (*c.* AD 85–155) famous disquisition on the benefits of maternal breastfeeding must also be understood against the backdrop of a wide-spread use of nurses; indeed, when he and his associates call on the new father in his home, Favorinus' statement "I do not doubt …

that she [the wife] will nourish her son with her own milk" is soon followed by the protests of the wife's mother. She argues that the girl should be spared, so that to the pains of childbirth would not be added the burdensome and difficult task of nursing; since the family belonged to the nobility, the wife could have been very young, and quite literally a girl in modern terms (see Chapter 5.5).[54]

Reasons adduced in the written sources for avoiding maternal nursing include vanity (women supposedly regarded their nipples as some kind of beauty marks), and the risk of aging prematurely or suffering from undernourishment, resulting in limited possibilities to give birth to more children. The Graeco-Roman physician Soranus of Ephesus (fl. *c.* AD 98–138) advocated maternal breastfeeding only when the mother was as good an option as a nurse, but he also says that the mother's milk was the most suitable for the child. Furthermore, mothers were most sympathetic to their own children. In a similar vein, Favorinus appealed to the bond of mind and love established between parent and child in maternal breastfeeding, which he saw destroyed in the practice of wet-nursing. Children raised under such circumstances, he claims, have no real affection for their mother, only a polite and imaginary one.[55] As Plutarch expressed it in his *On the Education of Children*:

> I should say mothers ought to feed their infants and nurse them themselves. For they will feed them with a livelier affection and greater care, as they love them deep down inside and, according to the proverb, right out to their finger-tips. But the goodwill of foster-mothers and nursemaids is insincere and forced, as they love for pay.[56]

In Roman literature, the images of the wet-nurse are fraught with tension between the "good nurse" and the "bad nurse". This tension is not only due to what the nurse was – whether she was suitable for child-minding or not – but perhaps primarily because of what she represented. The wet-nurse was generally a slave, freedwoman or poor freeborn, with a predominance of the first two categories, while the nursling could belong to any class, including slaves.[57] If the nurse was a slave, accepting the task of wet-nursing was unlikely to have been a matter of choice, and for a freedwoman or poor freeborn, social obligations or economic necessity could be equally coercive. Acknowledging this coercion of the woman who was to tend a child for many years was generally too uncomfortable for Roman authors, so their attention was diverted to other aspects of their relationship.[58] Moreover, the discomfort was hardly mitigated by the fact that these authors were likely to have been such nurse-raised children themselves, and would not want to think of their childhood nurse as exploited against her will, if this made her affection a false one.

As was already hinted at above, some male authors considered the existence of nurses a sign of decadence. The satirist Juvenal, indignant and ironic as ever, locates the golden age of maternal nursing so far back in the past that it is virtually inaccessible: in the Golden Age of the reign of Saturn, before his son Jupiter gained ascendancy.[59] The Tacitean speaker linked the use of foreign nurses to a general decline in Roman morals; consequently, contemporary parents were lax, children grew up to be impudent, young men cared only about gladiators and horse-racing, and even their teachers condoned this, devoting their classes to the discussion of entertainments. The nurses are at the core and inception of this vicious development, imbuing the green and unformed mind of the child with their "fictitious stories and delusions". Most importantly, they fail to guard their tongues and actions in front of their infant master.[60]

From the perspective of the elite nursling, the wet-nurse is often celebrated as a symbolic comforter figure in Roman literature.[61] This is the good nurse, who foolishly dotes on her charges to such an extent that she resents their growing up, when they start to attend to the business of the forum rather than the pleasures of the nursery.[62] The good nurse was loyal unto and beyond death, in the most adverse conditions. For example, the emperors Nero and Domitian (reigned AD 81–96), who were thoroughly disliked by the senatorial class at the time of their deaths, were dutifully buried by their nurses in the family tomb and family temple respectively.[63] Parents and nurslings could reciprocate by giving the good slave nurse her freedom through manumission, which seems to have been fairly common to judge by the epigraphic evidence.[64]

It is also well-known that Pliny the Younger (*c.* AD 61–*c.* 112), renowned for his *Letters*, gave a small property to his old nurse, and was particularly anxious to ensure it was profitable.[65] Sandra Joshel has suggested that the self-conscious solicitude with which Pliny the Younger provides for his nurse is not just an expression of his affection for her, but also an attempt to reverse the relation of dependence he once had to her; the adult master has regained the upper hand, restoring the proper power relation between master and slave.[66]

This public discussion of the hazards and advantages of wet-nursing indicates that great care had to be taken in the selection of the nurse. Soranus wrote an entire chapter in his *Gynecology* on this topic, and two more on the testing of milk and the proposed diet of the wet-nurse. Since the milk was believed to transmit both physical and moral qualities, the character of the nurse had to be submitted to scrutiny.[67] Favorinus warned of the dangers of leaving the inherent nobility of the highborn child to be corrupted by the "imported and base nourishment" of another's foreign milk. He continued:

> [This is] particularly [the case] if the one you will employ to supply the milk is either a slave or servile (as often happens), is of a foreign and barbaric people, if she is wicked, disfigured, and drunken; for most of the time, just about anyone who is lactating is employed, without discrimination.[68]

While Favorinus completely dissuaded from wet-nursing for this reason, Soranus stressed that the nurse must abstain from sex and wine-drinking, as these activities ruined the milk. Sexual pleasure caused the milk to decrease or entirely disappear, whereas alcohol made the nurse inattentive to her charge or might even make her unwittingly crush it, and the children grew drowsy and sluggish, even trembling, dizzy and spasmodic.[69] Here, the image of the nurse has been assimilated to the image of the bad wife, who indulged herself in promiscuity and wine-drinking.[70]

The nurse had to be agreeable and affectionate in order to perform her duty without hesitation and disgruntled murmur. The importance of a calm temper was further emphasised by Soranus, as it not only affected the physical well-being of the child – she was able to handle a baby crying inconsolably with composure – but the future temper of her charge as well:

> She must be incapable of anger, as the nurslings come to resemble the nurses in their nature, and because of this they become sullen from an angry [nurse], but gentle from a moderate one. The angry nurses can behave like madwomen, and sometime when the child is weeping from fear and they are unable to restrain it, they cast it from their hands or expose it to danger. Therefore, the nurse should be neither superstitious nor possessed by a god, so that she will not put the child in danger while she is shaking in rapture.[71]

The detailed stipulations of extant wet-nursing contracts from Roman Egypt demonstrate that the risk of employing a "bad nurse" was perceived as very real.[72] However, unlike the case in pre-industrial Britain, for example, the child was generally not relocated to the home of the nurse,[73] but stayed in its own home while the nurse moved in with the family.[74] This made the exercise of parental supervision easier. For those who could afford it, it was also recommended to employ several wet-nurses. Soranus advocates making the child accustomed to the milk of more than one nurse, as this eased the transition to another nurse if the first one fell sick and died; the child might even starve to death if it refused milk from another source.[75]

Apart from these fully pragmatic considerations, having several nurses might facilitate control – through peer pressure – as well. In the stories discussed in this chapter, however, only one nurse is mentioned, and the child suffers its demise either in its home, or outdoors. It is obvious that the child is not being constantly watched; available evidence seems to suggest that this

was quite common: even upper-class children were left unattended while they were sleeping.[76]

6.4 Fear, Grief, Regret and Remorse

Aelian's story does not provide us with any information on the emotional aftermath of the disaster; this is left implicit in the text. Ovid is more liberal with details, as he states that the nurse was "[f]rightened (*territa*) by the call of her nursling", and when she comes to Cranaë for assistance, the goddess tells her to lay aside [her] fear (*timorem pone*). Arriving at the royal palace, Cranaë and the nurse find the king and queen standing beside Proca's cradle, weeping (*flebant*).[77]

This scene of domestic despair at the fatal illness of an infant may seem unremarkable from our modern point of view, as this is the reaction we would normally expect from bereaved parents of both genders; this was not necessarily so in ancient Rome, where mourning was perceived as an – ideally – highly gendered activity.[78] Mourning, and particularly the display of mourning, is feminine (*muliebris dolor*), and not even quite fitting for women.[79] To mourn an infant was sometimes also considered more incriminating: since the infant had not begun to reach its adult potential, such a loss was regarded as less serious than losing grown up sons and daughters.[80]

In real-life situations, however, the discrepancy between ideal and practice was often manifest, as few could comport themselves in the manner of a Quintus Maximus, Lucius Paullus or Marcus Cato at the death of a child of any age (see Chapter 4.3): parents' grief could be very powerful.[81] The utter calm in the face of crisis exhibited by these larger-than-life figures was a philosophical ideal that not many could, or even wanted to, emulate. Indeed, the persistence with which philosophers attacked what they perceived as excessive grieving seems to suggest that powerful grieving was the norm, rather than the other way around.

It is well-known that Cicero (106–43 BC) himself grieved the death of his daughter Tullia in 45 BC very deeply and – to the minds of both his friends and his enemies – quite excessively, though he himself considered his reaction perfectly normal. However, his violent grief and studied avoidance of the public eye threatened to undermine his reputation, and scholars believe the *Tusculan Disputations* were written in the wake of this misfortune in an effort to mend his faltering repute, as the work represented the show of fortitude and "conquest of grief" his critics had called for.[82]

A contrast between the self-controlled and the weak man in this respect seems to have been commonly drawn. It was also exploited by Seneca the Elder (*c*. 50 BC–AD 39) in his preface to book 4 of his *Controversiae*. Here, Asinius Pollio, who dined on the day of the death of his son and declaimed in public again within three days, is compared with Quintus Haterius, who could not perform the rhetorical exercise on the father filing a lawsuit against the person dragging him from the graves of his three sons without tears interrupting him in mid-speech, as he remembered the loss of his own son. Though Seneca labels this breakdown "weak" – Haterius "bore" his loss with "a weak spirit" (*inbecillo animo tulisse*) – he also notes, without any apparent disapprobation, that when Haterius recovered his composure and spoke again with much greater force and plaintiveness, it was evident to all that grief can boost a person's abilities.[83]

The real objection to Haterius' behaviour in comparison to Pollio's seems to have been that Haterius displayed his own grief and allowed it to take over; an orator should exhibit emotion on his client's behalf, not his own. Yet there was one occasion on which it was permitted for a man to showcase grief: when he wanted to elicit public sympathy for his plight; then he could don the appearance of a mourner.[84] Nevertheless, Ovid was a poet, not a philosopher or politician, and might have aligned his grieving king with other kings portrayed in poetry, who often tend to indulge in their emotions. For this reason, kings and heroes in poetry were frequently mocked by philosophers, who considered them foolish and quite unheroic. Cicero, for instance, ridicules Agamemnon for tearing his long hair in grief – he has just called this type of behaviour feminine – and cites a quip by Bion of Borysthenes (*c*. 335–*c*. 245 BC), a Cynic-Cyrenaic philosopher, to the effect that this most foolish of kings pulled out his own hair as if baldness could soothe his grief.[85]

Whether Ovid wanted to play on this discrepancy between ideal and practice or not, many of his elite readers might have read the passage in this light. There is no hint of disapproval in Ovid's description, however, which would accord with the opinion of members of the non-elite, who held that such misfortunes were to be greatly feared (*extimescendas*). Luckily for Proca's nurse, the infant fully recovers, and goes on to become king of Alba Longa, the city preceding Rome.[86]

In cases lacking such a happy ending, as Aelian's narrative does, parents might be less forgiving; the parallel with Statius' story of Hypsipyle and Opheltes is instructive in this regard. When Opheltes has died, he is grieved by both his mother Eurydice and his nurse, much to the despair of his mother, who voices her resentment at the close bond between the baby and his nurse:

> …and yet more charming too were you, my son, to her; she alone knew you and you heard her calling, and you were ignorant of me. Mother had no joys from you. She, the undutiful, heard your plaints and tearful laughs, and enjoyed the first murmurs of your voice. She was always your mother while life remained, I am now.[87]

Ann Hanson and Suzanne Dixon have argued that the Romans were not much concerned with the issue of emotional attachment and physical bonding between mother and child, or at least that it was not a primary concern.[88] Granted that this may have been the case, passages such as this suggest that some Romans were not unaware of this aspect, though they might have chosen to disregard it when it suited them. Eurydice is clearly jealous of this intimacy between child and nurse, and feels she has been robbed of her chances to enjoy the company of her child, as she would have done when Opheltes grew older. Hypsipyle is accused of being undutiful (*impia*), and in the lines preceding this passage, she insinuates that Hypsipyle has been given the job on false premises: Hypsipyle claimed to be dutiful, as she alone of all women of her native Lemnos refrained from slaughtering her menfolk, saving her father's life in an act of *pietas* "filial piety", but she turned out to be a figure of *nefas* "impious deeds" after all, deserting her charge in the lone fields of Nemea.[89]

Eurydice laments the day when she lazily (*deside*) allowed Hypsipyle to nurture her child, expressing her regret at this fatal and, it seems, somewhat unreflected decision;[90] the infant's parents in Aelian's story could conceivably do the same. Regret (*paenitentia*) was an emotion experienced when a state of affairs, such as the death of a child due to the lack of adult supervision, brought distress, and simultaneously kindled a desire to undo this deplorable state of affairs; Robert Kaster speaks of a "counterfactual urge",[91] which captures this feeling nicely. Eurydice would wish that she never relinquished her baby to Hypsipyle, and would undo her decision if she could. What runs through the head of Proca's nurse when she hears his cries for help is not depicted in Ovid's poem, but the fear she feels could plausibly be mingled with regret: why did I not watch over him?

Since the type of regret discussed here concerns actions over which we can exert some control – the most common form of the emotion – it also tends to implicate evaluations of moral worth. For the Romans, experiencing regret because of their own folly (*stultitia*), rashness (*temeritas*) or lack of foresight (*imprudentia*) was "a blot upon their honor and … comments on their worth as persons".[92] As the deaths of the children could be construed as a result of imprudence, it necessarily reflects on the evaluation of the characters of the individuals involved; witness Eurydice's accusations against Hypsipyle of being undutiful.

Both Eurydice's and Hypsipyle's laments over the dead Opheltes are self-regarding, tending to focus on the impact of his death on themselves; Eurydice regrets missing the opportunity to be his real mother, Hypsipyle regrets losing the sole audience for her therapeutic storytelling.[93] Though the following argument is admittedly speculative, as Ovid's text does not explore this aspect, the question is whether the same would be the case for Proca's nurse: her readiness to action might imply that she is less concerned with the effect of Proca's misfortune on her own standing, and more with its consequences for him. In other words, the emotion she feels would be other-regarding rather than self-regarding, which would make it into remorse rather than regret, if we translate it into modern terms.[94]

To conclude, the basic message in the stories is well expressed in the grave inscription of a four-year-old slave boy (dated prior to AD 31), in which a cruel witch's hand (*saga manus crudelis*) is said to have snatched the child away:

> Jucundus, [the slave] of Livia [the wife] of Drusus Caesar, son of Gryphus and Vitalis. As I grew towards my fourth year, I was seized and killed when I could be sweet for my mother and father. A cruel witch's hand snatched me away, while she remains on earth and inflicts harm everywhere with her art. You parents, closely watch your children, so that grief will not be fixed in your entire heart.[95]

Parents are advised to closely watch their children, to avoid experiencing the grief of losing them. This grief is firmly located in the heart, the seat of emotions in Plato (*c*. 429–347 BC).[96] The perpetrator singled out as guilty for the death is an anonymous witch (*saga*), who could perhaps not be accused openly for her crime, but could be made to understand that she was under suspicion in this way.[97] As tombstones lined the roads into the city where every literate person could read them, the inscription was tantamount to a publication of this suspicion.[98]

6.5 Emotion Work with Sticky Objects and Key Symbols

Given the dubious reputations of both wet-nurses and apes, it is perhaps no coincidence that both figure in this story. The wet-nurse and the ape are complex characters, and therefore they can be adapted to many different situations in which particular traits from a larger cultural repertoire can be selected and emphasised. Hence, they are very apt for articulating the cultural tensions underlying the story, involving the inherent dangers of leaving your

offspring in the hands of someone else, with an unknown and unpredictable degree of watchfulness and sense of duty.

Sara Ahmed has suggested that emotions tend to attach more easily to certain figures than to others; such figures constitute "sticky objects".[99] The nurse appears to be of this nature too: she was a focus of emotions related to the welfare of infants and small children. Apart from the real-life nurse, who scarcely appreciated being subjected to the prejudices often accompanying a sticky object status, others not so affected – tellers and audiences – could use the figure of the nurse as a foil for sorting out the manifold emotions revolving around the survival of the family.

In this respect, the nurse functions as a "key symbol" in Sherry Ortner's sense.[100] As is well known, Ortner made a distinction between "summarizing symbols" and "elaborating symbols". Summarizing symbols represent, in a single unitary form, the meanings of a particular social system, and in a powerfully emotional and rather undifferentiated way; generally, they have to be embraced or rejected wholesale. In the modern world, typical examples include the national flag, the Christian cross, etc. Elaborating symbols are different, as they allow for and encourage reflection, "providing vehicles for sorting out complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly action". As such, they are fundamentally analytic, and they gain their importance from this capacity to impose order on experience. This is commonly achieved in two ways: either the symbol furnishes a root metaphor that can be employed to speak of other areas of experience – in the contemporary world, the computer or machine is such a root metaphor – or it proposes a culturally accepted model of successful social action, a key scenario; the American idea that hard work can help you win fame and fortune regardless of your socioeconomic background is a lucid case in point.[101]

The nurse is a hybrid key symbol, as she blends the qualities of both summarising symbols and elaborating symbols; Ortner rightly observes that her subdivision of symbols is situated on a continuum, where summarising and elaborating symbols constitute the respective ends of it. The nurse is clearly used as a vehicle for sorting out feelings and ideas, but she does certainly not furnish a root metaphor in Roman culture, nor do the stories about her advocate any clear-cut key scenario, except possibly to avoid hiring her. Instead she seems to be a focus of emotion, but not in the lofty, virtually sacralised sense that summarising symbols commonly are. While summarising symbols and what they stand for can be contested in the culture, they nevertheless tend to be very positively charged for large segments of the population, and this would not quite appear to be the case with nurses in Roman society. The

symbol of the nurse does not imply a crystallisation of commitment to an ideal she putatively represents.[102]

In a manner similar to the way in which the child-killing demons crystallised the negative characteristics of the envious (see Chapter 5.4), the nurse condenses and displays the fault of negligence, but, unlike the demons, she is a member of the human world, not a supernatural creature. This makes her position more ambivalent: on the one hand, she is not construed as an exclusively negative force as the child-killing demons are, while, on the other, her fully human status makes her more dangerous. Superhuman forces might be perceived as powerful, but they did not operate from the heart of human society as the nurse did. Since discriminating between a dutiful and a negligent nurse was not easy – not even when she had proven exceptionally dutiful in the past, as Eurydice bitterly experienced – parents could never be sure they contracted the right one.

The figure of the nurse also externalises threat and blame to some extent in these narratives, as the child-killing demons did (see Chapter 5.4), removing focus from the immediate family, but that does not appear to be her principal function. As far as we know, the deaths of children in real life were generally not blamed on negligent nurses, only in stories such as these. This suggests that the worst-case scenario enacted in these stories does not primarily represent a prerehearsal of future ills as in the previous chapter, but rather a tool for what Arlie Hochschild called "emotion work", the active management of emotion and feeling to conform to a perceived social standard.[103]

If the use of wet-nurses was a matter of convention, necessity and/or expediency, but the practice was understood to possess considerable drawbacks, this discrepancy had to be coped with in some manner. Although it could be argued that the critique of the use of wet-nurses was a phenomenon chiefly confined to the philosophically educated male elite, and that others viewed the practice as largely unproblematic, the fact that the tension between these perspectives had to be so explosively exorcised in these stories indicates that the ancient Romans were not unaware of it.[104] Thus, we propose that this state of affairs required emotion work on the part of parents, as it did of the nurses who were, as we recall, not necessarily voluntarily engaged in this line of duty. Here, however, we will mainly focus on the emotion work of the former.

Sometimes, this process of coping would involve trying to modify the individuals' own emotions for the situation, rather than attempting to change the situation itself; this approach would probably be the only readily available one for a reluctant nurse. As this work was a form of labour, properly paid or otherwise, her management of emotion would be a type of "emotional

labour".[105] Concerning the parents, Statius' Eurydice initially exhibits very successful emotion work, uncritically – or lazily, as she says – accepting the social "inevitability" of employing a nurse for her child. After his demise, she refuses to "perform the emotion management necessary to feel what, according to the official frame, it would seem fitting to feel", giving vent to her grief, anger and desire for revenge. She wants Hypsipyle dead, and can only bemoan the fact that no-one will grant her this wish. Relinquishing her earlier superb emotion work, she explicitly rejects the ideology on which it was based.[106]

Even though Ovid's and Aelian's stories do not elaborate on this point, the very content of the stories seems to point in a similar direction. They reveal the immensity of the emotion work required to sustain the practice of wet-nursing, and question the prudence of that practice. Thus, it is in this respect that the keyness of the nurse as symbol in these stories can be understood. It rests on her capacity to articulate "widely applicable modes of organizing cultural phenomena", assimilating her to the elaborating symbol end of the spectrum: she is a nexus around which the emotion work of the family is at least partially centred.[107] Simultaneously, the cultural organisation of emotions and its vicissitudes in the family is laid bare.

This cultural organisation is patently not the same as in the modern era. Whereas the Roman mother was ideally expected to raise her children with the same severity with which the father ruled over his family, the contemporary Western mother is ideally expected to perform a much more nurturing role.[108] In folkloristic discussions on the corresponding modern legends, therefore, inspired by Marie Langer's psychoanalytic interpretation of an Argentinian variant of the legend circulating in the 1940s, the image of the bad, cannibalistic mother emerges as an underlying theme.[109]

In other words, the deranged or stoned babysitter is regarded as a metaphor for the bad mother, appearing in different incarnations depending on the socio-cultural context in which the legends are told. Since the social expectations of the Roman mother were different, however, we do not consider the ancient stories to represent the bad, cannibalistic mother; besides, the ancients had other stories addressing this theme quite openly (e.g. the story of Mormô in Chapter 5.3). It might well be that the parents' absence from the proceedings rather points to lax supervision, which was the official role of both mother and father, than recrimination for not performing these duties themselves.

Be that as it may, the therapeutic qualities of the stories lie, on the one hand, in providing an explanation for sudden crises: the urge to find an explanation – to endow the ultimately meaningless with meaning – is a very common reaction to crisis.[110] In psychological literature, this drive to meaning

is sometimes reduced to mere scapegoating or apportioning of blame, and is therefore viewed negatively, as an obstacle to coping.[111] Yet by exploring the circumstances in which the life-threatening or fatal events occurred, these can be plotted into a narrative that makes sense of one's loss. As any parent knows, children could potentially suffer an accident innumerable times during the day, and in reality it is impossible to be watching them every single second; they can suffer accidents even while they are being watched.

This will to meaning in a broader sense, of finding meaning even in suffering, is often discussed in research on grief, especially related to sudden death and so-called ambiguous loss, i.e., loss that defies closure.[112] Viennese psychologist Viktor Frankl (1905–1997), himself a survivor of the Holocaust who pioneered logotherapy – a form of existential therapy with the express purpose of helping clients to find meaning in life – suggested that this striving for meaning was a primary motivational force for human beings.[113] Therefore, the will to meaning should be nurtured and not condemned, though it might sometimes benefit from being redirected.

In the case of Aelian's story for example, understanding the nature of apes and the circumstances that led to the animal's successful intrusion into the home would be one way of adducing "some logic, coherence, or rational reasoning about what has happened". If this first phase of meaning-making is missing, there is no perception of the nature of the problem. Here several possibilities suggest themselves: the negligent nurse could be the problem, or simply the open window, or even the presence of apes in Roman society. Without perception of what the problem is, no further analysis of its implications can be made, and no steps can be taken to cope with it.[114]

On the other hand, the stories could function as a way of questioning conventional values and highlighting the strains of the emotion work required to uphold them. Becoming aware of the emotion work and reflecting on whether it is actually worth the trouble or not would, in narrative therapy terms, be part of the process of reauthoring one's life and relationships. A preliminary stage of the process would be the scrutiny of the socio-cultural assumptions that we often unconsciously reenact, exploring the "history of ideas" in which we find ourselves entangled. Since narrative therapists do not presuppose that all aspects of a problem are necessarily experienced as harmful by the person, the outcome of this scrutiny does not always result in a wish to sever all ties to the problem; only the individual is entitled to make this decision.[115]

7 Barren Relations

The Lure of Beautiful Witches and Man-Eating Demons

The key texts which form the basis of this chapter are either of oral origin, or, in one case, strongly resembles stories of oral origin. There is a great deal of evidence to demonstrate the oral origin of Aristomenes' Story, i.e., the witch-story in Apuleius' (b. *c.* AD 125) *Metamorphoses* book 1, analysed in Chapter 7.1. The author, Apuleius, clearly states that it is a traditional story, terming it a *fabula*. Indeed, the entire work incorporates a series of such stories, as the author himself makes manifest: "But I would like to bring together various tales for you in that Milesian style, and to delight your benevolent ears with a charming murmur, ...". In this first passage of the first book, Apuleius turns to the reader – elsewhere accordingly specified as a *lector* – as someone *listening*.[1] Although one has to take into account that, in antiquity, literary texts were normally read aloud, Apuleius' text is even more oral in character, as it appears to be written much in the manner of a storyteller telling a tale.[2]

The oral element in Apuleius was very apparent to other authors in antiquity, and, as mentioned in Chapter 2.4, the late Roman author Macrobius disparagingly described Apuleius' work as belonging to the children's nursery,[3] in other words being made up of old wives' tales. And, following the criteria set up in Chapter 2.4 for identifying oral elements in ancient literature, a number of arguments can be put forward to support the view that this story was of oral origin.

The first criterion is met, for in plot and content Aristomenes' Story closely resembles a story about two witches of known oral origin that circulated in Messenia, Greece around 1900.[4] Apuleius' witches are likened to fear-invoking female demons (*lamiae*) known to feed on men's flesh and blood. The fourth criterion – the description of a storytelling context – is also filled. Leading his tired horse along a road, Lucius, the main character of the *Metamorphoses*, comes across two travelling companions arguing about a story and asks to hear it too.[5] This witch-story – which turns out to be horrific, indeed hair-raising – is in fact told by one of the witches' victims: Aristomenes.

Supernatural creatures are a typical feature in many stories of oral origin, and in Chapter 7.2 three stories about man-eating female demons are discussed and analysed in some detail. The first comes from Flavius Philostratus' *The Life*

of Apollonius of Tyana, the second from Lucian's *A True Story*, the third and final from Dio Chrysostom's *Discourses*. Beginning with Flavius Philostratus, the story of a man-eating demon revealed by the philosopher Apollonius, seems to have been part of the oral tradition at the time:

> … this is the most familiar story about Apollonius … … for many know it inasmuch as it occurred in the centre of Greece; in short, they have only received by hearsay that he once overpowered a *lamia* in Corinth, …[6]

Here the author makes it clear that stories about Apollonius saving a young man from being devoured by a man-eating demon (*lamia*) were in oral circulation. The basis of the much more detailed story in his work, however, Philostratus claims to have come from a written work. In the scholarly debate, different views on the truth of Philostratus' claim of having access to the written memoirs of Apollonius' disciple Damis have been put forward, and many have doubted the existence of these memoirs.[7] What the passage quoted above suggests is an oral origin of the story, and, as Graham Anderson argues, it "firmly belongs to ancient demonology and folklore".[8]

Turning to the story from Lucian's *A True Story*, this narrative is somewhat different in character. Rather than adapting a single story of oral origin to a literary context, the author made ample use of the general oral traditions and literary traditions of oral origin – namely typical tall tales – resulting in parodic stories with a distinct satirical twist.[9] The difference from other stories of oral origin thus lies in the manner in which the author treated this material.

The third story – *A Libyan Myth* – from Dio Chrysostom's *Discourses* begins with the words: "[o]nce upon a time, so it is said, …" (*Legetai gar palai pote…*), strongly suggesting an oral origin of the story.[10] This – the third criterion discussed in Chapter 2.4 – is typical of these traditions. For instance, we find a similar phrase – "once upon a time" (*olim*) – in the opening of the story of *The Country and the City Mouse* (though of course in Latin) in Horace's (65–8 BC) *Satires*.[11]

7.1 A Story of Witches and *Lamiae* in Apuleius

As suggested by its title – *Metamorphoses* – the overarching theme for Apuleius' work is shape-shifting. The most important of these metamorphoses is the novel's main character Lucius turning into an ass, and already in antiquity it was also known as *Asinus aureus*: *The Golden Ass*.[12] Shape-shifting in turn was associated with witches and magic, and indeed there are a number of witch-stories in this work. In this chapter, we discuss a witch-story from the

Metamorphoses – book 1.5 to 1.20 – a story known by the name of its narrator as Aristomenes' Story.

It is a story of how sexual desire could have dire consequences, in this case a disastrous, even deadly, outcome. In our view, it conveys a clear moral message concerning marriage, namely that extramarital relationships can pose a threat to the cornerstone of society: the family. A recurrent theme throughout the *Metamorphoses* is that infidelity, sexual adventures of different sorts, could and often did end badly.[13] This witch story is appropriately set in Thessaly, an area of Greece associated with witches, who were thought to have a particular ability to perform love-magic.[14]

Almost from the onset, things took on a bad turn for the story's anti-hero, Aristomenes: "… but as usually happens, I started out with my left foot …".[15] Left (Latin *sinister*) was regarded as both ominous and unlucky,[16] and here Apuleius employs a proverbial expression for things taking a bad turn.[17] As the story unravels, it is clear that Aristomenes has not only run out of luck, his actions also result in running into two menacing witches: Meroe and her sister Panthia. For what began with a business-trip to Thessaly for Aristomenes – a trader in cheese and honey – both starts and ends badly.

Like many of the names in the *Metamorphoses*, Aristomenes is a pun. It is a name that suggests courage – *aristos* "best" and *menos* "might" in Greek – but Aristomenes is clearly something of a coward. The name Aristomenes is likely to be a reference to the brave king of Messenia who fought the Spartans in the Second Messenian War (*c.* 650 BC), the fictional character being the very opposite of all the associations the name carried: an anti-Aristomenes.[18] He comes from a city by the name of Aegium – and as pointed out by Wytse Keulen, it is a name that can be translated as "Goat-town": an appropriate name for a trader in cheese.[19] Aegium was a city in Achaea, situated on the coast of the Gulf of Corinth, and perhaps it is no coincidence that the historical hero and the anti-hero both come from the Peloponnese.

Let us begin from the beginning of the story. Having heard of a good business opportunity – cheap, and yet fresh and fine-flavoured cheese being for sale in the Thessalian town of Hypata – Aristomenes sets off with great haste. On his arrival, he hears that another tradesman, judging by his name Lupus (Latin for "wolf") a man clearly characterised by an aggressive competitiveness, has already made the advantageous deal and bought all the cheese. Despite the late hour, Aristomenes then decides to go to the baths, and while walking through the streets, he suddenly:

> … caught sight of Socrates, my old companion. He was sitting on the ground half covered by a rent old cloak, [appearing] quite different in his pallor; he

> was deformed by miserable emaciation, like those cast-offs of Fortune who are usually asking for alms in the street.[20]

Let us at this point stop to discuss the name Socrates. Socrates not only carries the same name as the famed philosopher (469–399 BC), he bears a strong resemblance to how Socrates is satirically portrayed in Aristophanes' (460/50–before 386 BC) *Clouds*, i.e. as an anaemic, pale-faced miser.[21] Looking at other literary descriptions of Greek philosophers – and indeed intellectuals in general – these were stereotypically depicted as being pallid.[22] In fact, we need not look any further than to Apuleius' portrayal of himself in the work *Apologia*:

> … literary labour has wiped away my bodily grace; made my appearance thin; sucked out my energy; blotted my complexion and weakened my vigour.[23]

Despite his physical appearance, the fictional Socrates is far from a philosopher and intellectual; rather he is something of an antithesis of his historical namesake, an anti-Socrates.[24] The fictional Socrates has, for instance, a firm belief in the supernatural. In contrast, the philosophers – such as Socrates and Plato (*c*. 429–347 BC) – condemned superstition and storytelling involving supernatural creatures.[25]

Returning to the story, Socrates has been away from his hometown for years without a word, and Aristomenes lets him know of the sorrowful fate his family has suffered in his absence:

> But at home you have already been lamented and bewailed, your children have been given guardians by decree of the provincial judge, and your wife, having rendered the funeral services and disfiguring herself with long-lasting grief and mourning – almost weeping her eyes into uselessness – is urged by her parents to cheer up the misfortunate household with the joys of a new marriage.[26]

It is evident that Socrates' actions – shameful as they turn out to be – and his long-time absence from home came to have effects not only on his own life, but on the life and welfare of his entire family. His children were first and foremost bereaved of their father. Being declared dead, however, also had other negative consequences. By law, underage children who had lost their father had to be given guardians (*tutores*), and most probably it is the "widow" and her relatives that have had to turn to the magistrate to appoint these guardians.[27]

This makes it clear that Socrates had omitted to write a will, for in a will you would normally name a trusted friend as a guardian in the case of your demise. If no such person was named in the will, or no will existed, the closest kin (on the father's side) would be appointed as guardian. It was only lacking these that one was legally obliged to ask the local magistrate to

appoint a guardian. Appointed guardians of the latter kind were sometimes suspected of having embezzled the children under their legal custody of their inheritance.[28] In other words, Socrates' irresponsible behaviour potentially put his children in a precarious economic position, besides all emotional aspects of being bereaved of their father.

Furthermore, Socrates' lawful wife had to lament him in the belief that he was dead, and the description of her deliberately disfigured appearance is in accordance with Roman customs for women in mourning, as for example depicted by Cicero (106–43 BC): "… these many detestable forms of mourning: filthiness, women's rending their cheeks, beating their breast, thighs and head".[29] After these initial funerary rites it was mandatory for women to mourn their dead husbands for a period of around one year before being able to remarry.[30]

After this period of mourning Socrates' wife, or rather "widow", is about to remarry; a marriage she is presumably reluctant to enter, for it is made clear that she was put under pressure by her parents to do so. This is no surprise; the Roman marriage ideal for a woman was to be married only once in her lifetime, to be an *univira* "one man's wife".[31] This ideal continued well after Augustus' marriage laws made it mandatory for widows to remarry,[32] for this practice was praised both in funerary inscriptions and in literature of that period.[33] The purpose of Augustus' laws was to ensure that a woman's child-bearing years did not remain barren, but in practice, for many women, the prime reason for remarrying must have been of an economic and practical nature.[34] Socrates' "widow's" remarriage meant that his children would be facing having a stepfather with all the complications that situation could entail.

Having heard Aristomenes tell the sorrowful story of his family's fate, Socrates' reaction is one of deeply felt shame. Shame turns his pallid complexion into a red hue, and he quickly tries to cover his head with his rent *pallium*,[35] thereby involuntarily exposing his private parts. The scene is on the one hand hilarious, on the other hand it illustrates his helplessness, foreshadowing how utterly defenceless he will be when he later encounters the witches. Aristomenes' mood then shifts from one of anger to pity for his old friend, and quickly covers him up and decides to take him to the baths.

Socrates was not only clad in rags, it is soon apparent that he is encrusted in filth, revealing that it was long since he had a bath. In other words, Socrates has not only been estranged from his family, he has equally been separated from society, resembling an outcast not being able to partake in one of the most important everyday practices of Roman life: bathing.[36]

Already when Aristomenes first started to walk to the baths, it was getting late, the evening star having begun to rise, hence the sun must now

have set.[37] In the city of Rome, the opening hours of the baths were from afternoon to early evening; after this, social outcasts, including the poorest of the prostitutes, could enter.[38] Aristomenes would probably have been ashamed to take Socrates to the baths during day-time, yet this action can be seen as an attempt to bring Socrates back to society. He then takes Socrates to an inn, treating him to things that he appears not to have enjoyed for an extended period of time: wine, conversation, even jesting.

Then, in a sudden change of mood, starting with a deep sob and beating his forehead with his hand, Socrates begins to tell Aristomenes the story about his misfortunes. Heading homewards, Socrates had decided to a make a brief detour to visit a gladiatorial show in Larissa, but on his way there through a desolate valley he was robbed of all his earnings by bandits.[39] He was finally able to flee, but the fate that was to follow was one much worse. He sought help at the house of the innkeeper Meroe, Meroe being yet another of Apuleius' numerous "significant names".[40] Let us therefore, briefly, discuss her name, which evoked associations with both heavy drinking and the exotic Ethiopia.

The name Meroe contains a deliberate pun on the Latin word for undiluted wine: *merum*. Someone who drinks too much was called a *merobiba*.[41] To drink undiluted wine was regarded as truly uncivilized,[42] something expected of drunkards,[43] potentially even dangerous.[44] The name Meroe may also refer to the place-name Meroë in Ethiopia, a major city on the island carrying the same name.[45]

Returning to the story, Socrates tells Aristomenes that the innkeeper Meroe turned out to be: "… an old, but rather handsome woman …". Having recounted the robbery to Meroe – also letting her know how anxious he was to get home – she takes pity on the poor Socrates. Socrates is first served a hearty meal, and soon he was seduced by the innkeeper, something which sealed his fate: "… because of this one instance of sexual congress I ended up in a long and destructive relationship … ".[46] The meal served by Meroe marks the beginning of the end for Socrates; correspondingly, one of his last actions in life was partaking of a simple meal shared with Aristomenes, as we shall see. But the miseries and suffering Socrates will experience are to be seen as the consequences of extramarital sex.[47]

Socrates ironically speaks of her as his *bona uxor* "good wife", when in fact the case is quite the contrary: she is neither his wife nor is their relationship in any sense of the word "good". It may be, however, that Meroe regarded their relationship as marriage, hence Socrates' ironic words. But despite the fact that the relationship was of long standing (*annosam*) it was not, and could never, count as marriage. Given that Socrates was already married, it would have been bigamy, a practice prohibited in Roman society.[48] Even in the

hypothetical case that Socrates had not been married, there would still have to be a mutual agreement between the two parties – *consensus* – to make the marriage valid;[49] cohabitation was not enough.[50]

An ideal marriage, moreover, one in which the relationship between husband and wife was "good", would have been characterized by *concordia*,[51] i.e. harmony, mutual love,[52] and respect. If anything, the relationship between Meroe and Socrates lacked, precisely, harmony, love and respect. Their relationship – regardless of what it is called – was in most respects the reverse of both typical marriages and generally held marriage ideals in Roman society.

A discussion of the emotions of the novel's characters is not complete, however, without examining the ones which the witch Meroe conspicuously fails to experience. Significantly, she is entirely devoid of *verecundia* vis-à-vis Socrates, who is supposed to be her "husband". In the Roman world, wives were expected to pay their husbands honour by respecting their *maiestas* "face" as the greater party in the relationship, while husbands should respect their wives as the lesser one. If this emotion was experienced and expressed in action, the individual possessed and felt *verecundia*, an emotion lying somewhere between respect and shame in the Roman emotional spectrum.[53]

Meroe utterly fails to respect Socrates' "face" as her superior, indeed she forces him into the position of her inferior, and she is pointedly unconcerned with saving his face as a respectable man, leaving him to wander around in public clothed in mere rags. She also fails to feel *verecundia* in the sexual sphere. An honest woman (*pudica*) would feel the restraint of *verecundia* in sexual affairs, inducing her to submit only to licit sex, in the right circumstances, in the right ways and with the right person.[54] A man actually married to someone else is not a suitable partner. Moreover, Meroe acts as though she was the male head of their household (*paterfamilias*) taking all of the meagre income that Socrates manages to make as a sack-carrier.[55]

Another example of this reversal of ideals is the difference in age between the two. Meroe is described as an old woman (*anus*), whereas Socrates must have been reasonably young.[56] In most Roman marriages, it was quite the other way around, the man being older than his wife.[57] Having heard Socrates blame his misfortunes on evil fate (*mala Fortuna*) when in fact his own bad choices caused his downfall, bring about a sudden shift in Aristomenes' mood and his anger erupts with the words:

> "By the heavens" ... "you certainly deserve to endure the worst, if indeed there is anything worse than your current state: you preferred the pleasures of Venus and a leathery harlot (*scortum scorteum*) to your own family and children (*lari et liberis*)".[58]

This passage forms a fundamental part of Aristomenes' story: Socrates has shamefully abandoned his wedded wife to live with a woman of lesser repute.[59] Meroe is by no means young, yet she is still sexually attractive, and indeed very sexually active, for Socrates is not her first lover. There is no mention of Socrates and Meroe's relationship having produced any children, nor was it to be expected given her age, which is later described as *altioris aetatis* "fairly advanced".[60]

In other words, Socrates has left a woman who was clearly fertile, having given birth to his children. Instead he has entered a relationship that was both barren and bitter. Meroe is in fact the very opposite of the ideal Roman wife (*matrona*) – chaste, fertile and industrious[61] – quite on the contrary, she is an unchaste, infertile drunkard. The dichotomy between a truly good wife in the form of Socrates' "widow", and a "good wife" as Socrates calls Meroe, is made manifest in the manner in which the latter is described, i.e., with all the attributes typical of a *meretrix* "prostitute".[62]

Socrates' reaction to Aristomenes' demeaning comments regarding Meroe as a "leathery harlot", is one of deeply felt fear: "… but being stunned into amazement and moving his index finger to his lips, he said: "Be quiet, be quiet!". Once again, Aristomenes' reply is one of contempt and utter disrespect, asking who this "royal innkeeper" (*regina caupona*) was.[63] Socrates now reveals that Meroe is not a mere innkeeper, she is in fact a *saga* "witch", with supernatural powers almost beyond imagination. She can: "… raise up ghosts and bring down gods, extinguish the stars and illuminate Tartarus itself …".[64] Aristomenes' retort is one of disbelief and disdain: "I entreat you … to remove the tragic curtain and roll up the stage curtain, and let us hear it in plain words."[65]

Meroe can make men from all over the world – Indians, Ethiopians and even Antipodeans, not only the locals – fall madly in love with her, says Socrates. It is clear that Meroe practices love-magic, a type of magic commonly associated with witches.[66] Socrates starts to tell his friend a series of stories, all of which illustrate Meroe's immoral behaviour, concerning the deeds done to those who showed disrespect to her. Not surprisingly, she severely punishes them, using her magical powers. In a number of cases, she transforms them into animals, i.e., they undergo metamorphosis.

A former lover who had been unfaithful to her is castigated by being transformed into a beaver, as a beaver afraid of being captured "liberates itself from its pursuers by mutilating its own genitals".[67] The proprietor of a nearby inn, a competitor, is in turn transformed into a frog: "… and now that old man is swimming around in a vat of his own wine, submerged in the dregs, calling out hoarsely to his former guests with obliging croaks".[68] A lawyer who

dared plead against Meroe in court is appropriately chastised by being turned into a ram, and his utterances are now all but a meaningless and nonsensical bleating. This is one of a number of instances in which Meroe's magical powers place her above the law and thereby outside the pale of society.[69]

A lover's wife is punished with perpetual pregnancy by sealing her womb, for having evoked the witch's anger with a witty remark. Whereas a normal pregnancy was expected to last for eight or nine months,[70] the poor woman has now been pregnant for no less than eight years, looking as though she was to give birth to an elephant.[71] In other words, Socrates' family was far from the first to be disrupted by Meroe's amoral and aggressive behaviour.

Socrates goes on telling the story of how the inhabitants of Hypata, having tired of Meroe's indecent deeds, decide to punish her in the harshest possible manner: by stoning.[72] This is to take place the following day, but the devious witch manages to put a stop to these plans with her almost limitless magical powers. Apuleius likens her to another witch, "like that Medea who – having obtained a single day's truce from Creon – burned up his whole house …".[73]

Meroe's magical powers, like Medea's, are in fact so strong that whatever transgression she makes – whether moral or legal – remains unpunished; furthermore, anyone who tries to punish or even speak badly of her will be the object of her anger and retribution. The law had its limits, being based on human power; in contrast, Meroe's superhuman powers knew no limits. Society cannot punish Meroe; rather Meroe punishes society and its inhabitants. Meroe manages to "incarcerate" the entire population, and they are released only when they promise to refrain from taking any action against her. Moreover, the man who instigated the attempt to have her stoned has to suffer the consequences of his insolence. With the aid of magic, she moves his entire house to a town which is situated on the top of a mountain, but as it is so crowded already, the house does not fit within the town walls and is dumped outside the town gates instead. It is stressed that the town is "… without water", suggesting that it was a truly uncivilized and hostile place that could hardly count as a city.[74]

Having heard Socrates tell the horrible story of Meroe's feats, Aristomenes is overcome with apprehension and fear, thinking that her supernormal abilities have made it possible for her to overhear their conversation. The exhausted Socrates soon falls asleep, and Aristomenes not only bolts the door of their room at the inn, he also places a bed in front of the door to prevent anyone from entering. Aristomenes stays awake out of fear (*prae metu*) for a long while, and it is only at midnight that he manages to close his eyes. Then:

> I had just fallen asleep when all of a sudden the doors were opened with a push more violent than you would credit any burglar for; indeed they were thrown to the ground as the pivot and socket were completely broken and torn out.[75]

Employing not physical force but powerful magic, the door of Socrates and Aristomenes' room is violently forced open by two witches: Meroe and her sister Panthia.[76] They are intent on revenge on account of Socrates' faithlessness, his plans to abandon Meroe, and for having belittled and defamed her. This happens in the dead of night, and needless to say, witches were associated with the night (see Chapter 8.2). Their criminal intentions were to put a violent end to Socrates' life, to commit murder. Still, it is no coincidence that their actions are likened to those of a burglar, for nighttime break-ins were regarded as a particularly severe crime.[77] The bed with which Aristomenes has tried to block the door lands on top of him:

> Then I experienced how certain emotions arise as their contraries, something which is in accordance with nature. Just as tears can spring from joy, so in my excessive fear (*nimio pavore*) I could not contain my laughter either, transformed from Aristomenes into a tortoise as I was.[78]

The scene is at once hilarious, with Aristomenes resembling a helpless tortoise,[79] and horrendous, as he has to face the two witches, and he cannot help himself from breaking into hysterical laughter. The sound of furniture being violently cast aside and Aristomenes' laughter must have caused a terrible racket. Yet, Socrates remains fast asleep, a sleep induced by magic.

One of the witches carries a lamp, the other a sponge and a sword: "The woman with the sword began: 'This, sister Panthia, is my darling Endymion, this is my Catamitus'".[80] Calling Socrates the two names – Endymion and Catamitus – Meroe expresses her utmost contempt for him, for the use of these names makes the nature of their relationship clear. The mythical Endymion was a handsome shepherd who was adored by Selene – the moon – who loved the way he looked when he was asleep.[81] Endymion was, in other words, a mortal loved by a goddess, and a number of passages in the *Metamorphoses* allude to Meroe as a "goddess" with supernatural powers.[82]

Calling Socrates Catamitus (Greek: Ganymedes) is perhaps a reference to two different aspects the name could carry. Ganymede was also a beautiful boy desired by a deity. He was abducted by Zeus to become his cupbearer and lover in the Olympus,[83] which perhaps may be an allusion to Socrates', as it seems involuntary, relationship to the witch. Moreover, it is an appropriate name for a man living with someone keen on emptying wine-cups. The word Catamitus, however, also designated a male prostitute who was passive.[84] By

calling him *Catamitus meus* "my catamite", she may either be suggesting that he was a beautiful "boy" who played a passive role in sexual relations with men, or more probably that Socrates took a passive part in sex with herself. In a sexual relationship, men were expected to play the active role and women the passive; men who did not play this active role were held in contempt.[85] In other words, Meroe suggests that Socrates is a weakling who could not pass as a real man. In fact, it was Meroe who took the active role in their relation – it was she who seduced Socrates – a type of sexual conduct considered aggressive and associated with prostitutes.[86] Given Meroe's background as an innkeeper, this kind of behaviour was perhaps expected.[87] The mythological references do not end here, for Meroe continues her ranting:

> … who day and night mocked my tender age; this is the one who spurned my love and not only maligned me with insults, but even prepared escape! Will I have to beweep my eternal loneliness, deserted like Calypso was through Odysseus' cunning?[88]

Meroe's outburst not only lacks all logic: everything is turned on its head. It is clear that she is an old woman, yet she accuses Socrates of having made use of her "tender age" (*aetatulam meam*). In the light of her long line of former lovers, including not only locals, but Indians, Ethiopians and even Antipodeans, the bitter claim of having to suffer "eternal loneliness" (*aeternam solitudinem*) seems less than likely. In short, she is what we might call a serial seducer.

Mythological characters unwilling to enter, or remain in, a relationship are a recurrent theme in this story. Meroe compares herself to the mythical Calypso, the beautiful nymph who wished herself to be married to a man actually already married. Calypso had taken care of the shipwrecked Odysseus, just as Meroe in turn took care of Socrates after he had been robbed of all his belongings by bandits, and, in both cases, it begins with being offered a meal.[89] Like the homesick Odysseus, who often sat on the beach weeping, having been held in Calypso's power for years, we first encounter Socrates in a sorry state. But whereas Odysseus is actually allowed to leave, Socrates finally flees the witch's house with the help of his friend Aristomenes. In his attempt to leave Calypso's island, Odysseus arouses the wrath of Poseidon and fears not for his life, but for a fate far worse – of not receiving a proper burial:

> Oh, how I wish I had died too and followed my destiny on that day when the Trojans cast their bronze spears at me, around the dead son of Peleus. Then I would have received funeral honours, and the Achaeans would have kept my fame in memory; now it is decreed by fate that I should die a pitiful death.[90]

Yet whereas Odysseus' fears about his fate never turn true, Socrates, as we will see, will suffer a terrible fate: a pitiful death, ending up hastily covered by sandy soil, being denied a proper burial.[91] But let us return to the story.

Stretching out her right hand, Meroe points out Aristomenes to Panthia: "But this" … "is the good counsellor Aristomenes, who was the adviser of this escape and now lies near death: stretched out on the ground, lying underneath his little cot and observing all this".[92] It is a scene which is at once amusing and awful, for fear makes the poor Aristomenes, who resembles a tortoise with the cot on his back, start to tremble, shake, and break into a cold sweat. Panthia's reply is no less fear-evoking: "Why not tear him into pieces while raving like Bacchants, or bind him and cut off his genitals?"[93] What Panthia suggests is that they should act like the women of Thebes, who in a Bacchic frenzy tore asunder young king Pentheus, who had failed to honour the god Dionysus (i.e., Bacchus).[94] Or, refraining from that, she suggests that Aristomenes should be castrated, to bereave him of his manhood, which brings to mind the story about the beaver who bit off its genitalia to avoid captivity.[95]

Meroe's act of revenge reveals her cool-headedness, for regardless of her earlier rage, her plans are truly diabolical: to brutally butcher Socrates and then deprive him of a proper burial, and yet leave his friend alive. For Meroe wants to make Aristomenes an involuntary accomplice by forcing him to leave the deceased Socrates hastily covered with sandy soil, and live with the fear of being accused of having been his friend's murderer:

> … "let him at least survive to bury the corpse of this wretch with a little earth". And moving Socrates' head to one side, she sank the entire sword through the left-hand [*sinistrum*] side of the neck down to the hilt. Producing a leather bottle, she carefully caught the emission of blood, so that not a drop was spilled anywhere. I saw this with my own eyes. Then, so as not to deviate, I suppose, from the sanctity of sacrifice [*uictimae religione*], she drove her right hand through that wound all the way down to his internal organs, and having searched them well, Meroe ripped out the heart of my poor companion; then he poured forth a sound, or rather an uncertain wheeze, through the wound – from that throat cut off by the attack of the sword – and he gurgled forth his breath of life.[96]

Cutting Socrates' throat with a sword resembles an animal sacrifice, and Aristomenes' sarcastic and ironic remark on Meroe not wanting to deviate from the ritual of animal sacrifice stresses two things. Firstly, that Socrates was slaughtered in a manner similar to the sacrifice of animals. Secondly, that despite these resemblances, what he witnessed was far from a correctly performed religious rite. For the rite is reversed, or perhaps perverted is a better word, in every imaginable way.[97] Thus, what Aristomenes sees is not

an animal sacrifice, but rather a kind of ritual murder or human sacrifice.[98] The Romans absolutely abhorred human sacrifice, which was regarded as extremely barbaric, and in every respect a repulsive act.[99]

Sacrifice to the heavenly gods were performed in public during daytime, this took place in secrecy in the dead of night, suggesting that it was part of forbidden magic.[100] The blood gathered in a leather bottle strengthens this argument, and the purpose of this was either to employ it in a rejuvenating ritual, or more probably to perform necromancy.[101] The scene is truly a travesty on the religious rituals: the victim lies not on an altar, but on a simple bed. Rather than taking place within the ritual confines of a religious sanctuary, it occurs at an inn: an unclean place indeed.

The sacrificial scene – a distortion of the Greek animal sacrifice – is like something out of Greek tragedy. In Greek drama, the victims of lethal violence – and they are many – are not merely killed: they are "slaughtered" or "sacrificed".[102] In plays such as Euripides' (480s–407/6 BC) *Iphigenia at Aulis*, we find human sacrifice (or, rather, what was intended to be a human sacrifice, which was replaced by an animal in the very last moment).[103] This sacrificial metaphor is used to underline the victim's utter helplessness.[104] In the light of Aristomenes' disparaging words – "I entreat you" ... "remove the tragic curtain" – to Socrates, regarding his claims about Meroe being a witch, it appears probable that Apuleius had Greek drama in mind. Aristomenes' story is not based on a drama, however, but, as argued above, most probably it had an oral origin, and it closely resembles a story in circulation in Messenia, Greece almost two millennia later, which is discussed in more detail below (Chapter 7.5).[105]

Let us briefly stop to discuss the legal aspects of Meroe and Panthia's actions; given the author's personal experiences of facing a trial,[106] Apuleius may well have had these in mind. The witches begin by breaking into Aristomenes and Socrates' room in the dead of night, and break-ins taking place at a time when people were at their most vulnerable were, as mentioned above, harshly punished by Roman law. Then follows the scene where Socrates' throat is cut and his heart torn out, and these acts are not merely horrendous, each of these was in itself a capital crime. First and foremost, the witches commit murder, which of course was in itself associated with the law's most severe punishments.[107] Moreover, it is not merely murder, but rather ritual murder: a nocturnal ritual in which the victim was made immobile with binding magic. Each and every one of these acts were punished by either crucifixion or by being killed by wild beasts in the arena.[108]

Returning to the story: Stuffing the wound where it was gaping the widest with a sponge, Panthia said: "Oh sponge, ensure that you, who are born of the

sea, return through a river".[109] By replacing his heart with a sponge, Socrates is, to use the words of Wytse Keulen, turned into a zombie, the living dead.[110] The witches remove the cot covering Aristomenes, and sit down and urinate on him. It has been convincingly argued that the witches' urinating was not merely meant to be humiliating, but was also regarded as a form of restraining magic, for Aristomenes lies there motionless.[111]

In our view, it can also be seen as a reversal of one of the punishments that men caught in adultery could suffer: to be urinated on by the house-slaves.[112] Meroe acts in a manner as though she and Socrates are married, and moreover, she treats Aristomenes as if he had "seduced" Socrates. In so doing, she takes on a male role in their relation, for it was men who imposed punishments of this (and much more severe) kinds on men who had committed adultery with their wives.[113] This specific scene – and the overall theme in Aristomenes' story in the *Metamorphoses* – thus revolves around marriage and morals.

As fast as they had entered the room, using magical means to open a locked door, the witches leave: "… the doors were restored undamaged to their former condition: the pivots settled into their sockets, the bars returned to the door-posts, the bolts ran back into the lock".[114] By performing this magical act, the witches firmly place the blame of murder on Aristomenes, for without any evidence of forced entry, no one will believe his innocence. He lies there like a new-born baby who has come out of his mother's womb – naked, cold, covered in urine and above all – absolutely defenceless.[115]

Having witnessed the witch Meroe brutally butchering his friend Socrates, and being in a room with a man that he thinks is murdered, he is convinced that he will be accused of murder and speaks of himself as "a sure candidate for being fixed to the cross", i.e. death by crucifixion.[116] Aristomenes decides to flee, but it is only after great troubles that he manages to unbolt the door, a door that was just both opened and closed with ease by magical means. It is still night and the gates of the inn were duly locked, and Aristomenes starts to shout at the porter to make him open them. Half-asleep the porter retorts that the roads are infested with robbers. Soon the porter starts to accuse Aristomenes of having a serious crime on his conscience:

> "But how do I know", he said, "whether you have slit the throat of that fellow traveller of yours, with whom you lodged as a guest at a late hour, and are fleeing to protect yourself?" "At that moment I remember seeing the earth split open, and the depths of Tartarus – with the dog Cerberus – utterly desiring to devour me".[117]

Aristomenes' fear of facing capital punishment makes him hallucinate, and he sees the Underworld and starts imagining that the three-headed hound of Hell, Cerberus, will devour him.[118] Unable to leave the inn, overcome by

hopelessness in fearing the consequences of a murder trial, he returns to his room, set on ending his own life.

Trials are a recurrent theme in Apuleius' works; there are several scenes in the *Metamorphoses*,[119] and of course we find his own experiences in the *Apologia*. But the only witness to Aristomenes' innocence is a mute object, a bed, and hence he believes himself doomed to die. The only way the bed can help Aristomenes is by providing the rope with which he will attempt to hang himself.[120] Yet even the bed will fail him in this fateful moment, as the rope is rotten and breaks, rendering his attempt at suicide a miserable failure. It appears that Apuleius liked to elicit multiple emotions: pity, amusement and horror, for instance. For much like the scene where Aristomenes is turned into a "tortoise"[121] – a scene at once piteous, hilarious and horrendous – this suicide scene is simultaneously pathetic, droll and dreadful.[122]

All that happens is that he falls down on Socrates, most probably creating a terrible racket. This evokes the anger of the porter (having been awoken once already by Aristomenes), who comes in shouting and yelling. Here the miracle occurs: Socrates angrily stands up and starts to defame and denigrate innkeepers,[123] first accusing the porter of planning to steal something, and then saying that: "… he shook me out of a very deep sleep, exhausted as I was, with his monstrous clamour".[124] Deep sleep was likened to death in antiquity,[125] and Socrates is in fact dead: the living dead.

Once again, there is a rapid shift of emotions; Aristomenes is overcome with joy as he sees that his friend is "alive", and he turns to the porter: "Most faithful porter, see my companion and father and brother, whom you – while you were drunk at night – falsely claimed I had murdered". He starts to hug and kiss Socrates, but as Aristomenes is drenched in urine, Socrates shoves him away in outright disgust. Apuleius describes the urine in which Aristomenes is drenched as particularly foul (*spurcissimi*),[126] and the witches that have humiliated him in this manner as *lamiae*.[127] Socrates starts to ask Aristomenes in a good humour about the reason why he smells, and, despite feeling uneasy and worried, he decides to make up a joke as an explanation.

The reader meets a rapid sequence of emotions in the two scenes, the attempted suicide and Socrates' return to "life". In the first scene: Aristomenes' fear, despair and hopelessness, the reader's horror, paired with pity and then amusement. In the second scene: the porter's and Socrates' respective outbursts of anger; Aristomenes' great relief as his hope returns, and following this a feeling of joy, Socrates' display of disgust, and finally Aristomenes' returning sense of fear and unease contrasted with Socrates' good humour. These emotions are in many cases each other's opposites: hopelessness and hope, fear and relief, anger and joy.

The two decide to leave the inn, and again their mood changes as the sun begins to rise above the horizon. He cannot see a trace on Socrates' neck where the witch had cut his throat, and Aristomenes' starts to think that it was all a bad dream caused by way too many cups of wine. He starts telling Socrates of how he had visions of being splattered with blood, caused by overindulging in wine and food. Socrates quickly retorts that Aristomenes is drenched in piss rather than blood, but says he also experienced a terrible nightmare in which he dreamed that his throat had been cut and his heart torn out. Socrates' fearful "nightmare" is in fact some form of recollection of the actual events, and he is soon weak and without breath. They thus agree to stop at a plane tree next to a quiet stream to eat,[128] and Aristomenes, being a trader in cheese, appropriately serves cheese and bread. Although not a trace of the wound can be seen, it is clear that Socrates is far from being well:

> … I saw him falter, looking drawn and emaciated, with a pallor like boxwood. His deadly complexion had distorted him to such an extent that I pictured those nocturnal Furies in my mind …[129]

Socrates' pale complexion reveals that, in essence, he is already dead. Apuleius appropriately likens the witches, who call each other "sister", with the Furies. Already in the beginning of Socrates' story, he refers to Meroe's violent vindictiveness to former lovers. The Furies were chthonic goddesses – sisters – who represented retribution in its most violent form. They were strongly associated with suffering and fear,[130] with death, the spirits of the dead (i.e. ghosts), and the Underworld: Tartarus.[131] In Aristomenes' story we find all of these features: the witch Meroe's violent vengeance, Socrates' and Aristomenes' suffering and fear, the spirits of the dead, and Tartarus.

Socrates' pale complexion, and the fact that they are all alone without witnesses, increases Aristomenes' strong sense of unease, a growing fear that he will be accused of having murdered his friend. He is so frightened of what his fate might be that he finds it difficult to swallow his food. Socrates, on the other hand, has a hearty appetite, perhaps a result of having his heart torn out and being emptied of blood, and devours the cheese. When he wants to quench his thirst in the stream next to the plane tree, his fate is sealed as a result of the magic spell that Meroe had put on the sponge that replaced his heart:

> He had hardly touched the water's surface with the edges of his lips, when the wound in his throat split up into a deep gash and the sponge suddenly rolled out, with only a little blood trickling out.[132]

This may well be a subtle reference to the philosopher Socrates' last act, but rather than drinking poison, it is water.[133] Then follows a scene that, in our

view, is the most important in the entire story: the hasty disposal of Socrates' dead body, being quickly covered by sandy earth. In previous scholarly work, there has often been a focus on Meroe's evil deeds and Socrates' death – the brutal murder, resembling ritual slaughter – whereas, in our view, it is another aspect that ought to come into the fore: that the man murdered is denied proper burial. We will return to discuss this aspect in Chapter 9.1. Aristomenes' fate, in turn, was a life in exile, parted from family and friends:

> I ran away through remote and pathless wilderness, and, as though guilty of manslaughter, I left my country and my family and embraced voluntary exile.[134]

This brings one of Publilius Syrus' (fl. 46–29 BC) *Sentences* to mind: "The exile with no home anywhere is a corpse without a grave".[135]

7.2 Stories of Man-Eating Demons

In Flavius Philostratus' (*c.* AD 170–*c.* 247) *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, a work commissioned by the empress Julia Domna (d. AD 217),[136] we find a miraculous story of how the Neo-Pythagorean philosopher Apollonius of Tyana (d. *c.* AD 96) saved a young man from being devoured by a demon. In short, the story is as follows: a young, handsome student of philosophy by the name of Menippus is one day approached by a strikingly good-looking woman as he is walking along the road to Corinth's port Cenchreae. She claims to be a Phoenician living in Corinth,[137] but as it turns out, this "woman" is in fact not human at all, she only looks like one. In the text, she is alternately called *empousa*, *lamia* and *mormoluke* – that is, different female, man-eating demons – or *phasma* "an apparition, phantom". She tells Menippus that she has long been in love with him, and invites him to come home with her for an evening with wine, song and sex.

Soon, Menippus is overwhelmed by his passions and he determines to marry her without the consent of their respective families. The day before the wedding, he meets the philosopher Apollonius, who tries to talk Menippus out of the marriage with the following words: "You are certainly … a fair youth and are hunted by fair women, but you are cherishing a serpent and a serpent is cherishing you".[138] Unable to convince the young man, he has to return the next day when the wedding is to take place. Apollonius then reveals the *empousa*'s devious plot to fatten up Menippus and then feed on his flesh.[139] All her wealth turns out to be nothing more than magic, as the drinking-cups of gold and show of silver disappear, as do the wine-bearers, cooks and servants. The idea that dinners, dining-halls and even servants could be conjured with

the help of magic is not unique to this text, it is also found in the *Greek Magical Papyri*.[140]

From the beginning of the story it is made perfectly clear that we are by no means dealing with a marriageable young woman, for no decent woman would ever approach a stranger in the street. It implies that she is promiscuous, acting much like a prostitute, approaching men on a public road. Public roads and city streets were associated with prostitutes,[141] and the playwright Plautus (fl. *c.* 205–184 BC) even calls a prostitute *publica via* "public road".[142]

She is the antithesis of a decent woman, or, as it usually was within the wealthy elite, a young girl, about to enter her first marriage. We know of Menippus' age, which was twenty-five, but nothing of hers. In the description of her, however, nothing suggests that she was in her early teens, an age when girls belonging to the elite got married.[143] Moreover, virginity was a highly valued quality for a woman entering her first marriage,[144] this woman is the very opposite: a woman of experience.

This story reflects an important aspect of Roman reality – in fact the very cornerstone of Roman society – namely views on marriage, motherhood and the foundations of the family. The *empousa*[145] is the very opposite of what was expected of a married woman, that is a chaste, modest, and dependable wife and mother.[146] Far from being modest, she is clad in the extravagant clothes of a courtesan (see Chapter 7.3), and lives a life of luxury. She is not only unchaste, but displays an active, almost aggressive, sexual behaviour, much like that of a courtesan.[147] She takes on the reversed role of a decent woman – she takes all initiatives, both sexual and other – making the young man in effect subordinate.

She is independent, living in her own house, without any form of family. Roman law required both the bride's and the groom's respective fathers' – or if these were deceased some other older male relative's – consent. The Roman jurist Paulus (fl. *c.* AD 160–230) states: "Marriage cannot exist unless everyone consents, that is, both those who are united, and those in whose power they are".[148] Moreover, marriage between freeborn men and prostitutes or adulteresses was prohibited by law.[149] Perhaps it is in the light of the latter we should see the words of Apollonius: "For this woman you cannot marry".[150] She is, he states, no *nymphe* "marriageable maiden", but in fact an *empousa*. In stark contrast to the ideal nurturing mother, she in fact lives off human flesh (*sarkôn … anthrôpeiôn erôsi*).

The moral message conveyed in this story is clear: relationships that were not based on formal marriage and which could never produce legitimate offspring should be avoided at all costs. The theme is one that we readily recognize from Roman literature – a young man falling in love with a prostitute –

not least in the comedies of the playwright Plautus.[151] A similar theme – young men or women falling in love with seductive strangers, who turn out to be evil or even deadly – is also found in folk stories of later date.[152]

Our next story, one of a somewhat earlier date than Flavius Philostratus' *empousa* story, comes from Lucian's (b. *c.* AD 120) *A True Story*, which unsurprisingly does not contain a single word of truth. The story we have chosen to study is about some adventurous sailors who land on an island inhabited only by women: women clad like courtesans, young and very attractive. Each of these women invite a man to their respective homes. The main character of the story is suspicious, however, and: "… had no good forebodings – and looking around carefully, I saw many human bones and skulls lying neglected".[153]

After having discovered these rather disturbing finds – the remains of devoured men – he becomes aware that the "woman" whom he has followed home is not human at all. He "… saw her legs were not a woman's but the hooves of an ass", and decides to act. Threatening this "ass-woman" with a sharp sword, he makes her reveal the real truth, namely that she and her compatriots lure men with the help of wine and sex and then attack them. He then calls on his comrades to tell them and tries to kill the "ass-woman" with his sword. She tries to get away by turning into water, but when he thrusts his sword into this water, it turns to blood.

There are a number of similarities between this story and that of Menippus, with man-eating demons appearing to be what they were not: women.[154] These "women" dressed and acted like prostitutes, who used sex to lure young men. In the latter case, the "ass-women" were distinctly non-human with their asses' legs, not dissimilar to the *empousa* who turns into a mule in Aristophanes' play *Frogs*.[155] But whereas the mule is a sterile animal and was strongly associated with sterility, the donkey was regarded as a particularly fertile animal. It might be suggested that these "ass-women", like mules, represented sterility.[156]

The story of the "ass-women" and that of Menippus may have carried the same underlying moral message[157] – the danger of desire – that nothing good could come out of relationships with unchaste and unreliable women. Yet the two stories are also very different in character. Where Menippus thinks that he has found a woman he loves and could marry, the sailors in Lucian's story have no illusions of what these women are. In the ports, prostitutes – female[158] and, perhaps more frequently, male[159] – could be found.[160]

Our third story – "A Libyan Myth" – comes from Dio Chrysostom's (*c.* AD 40/50–after 110) *Discourses*. This story consists of two parts and deals with what the author calls a *thêrion*, best translated as "animal" or "wild

beast", and what we have chosen to call a "snake-woman".[161] It starts with a description of what these "snake-women" looked like, and how they lured men into a certain and most dreadful death. Following this is a story of how two young men in a group of Greek envoys on their way to the oracle of Ammon were attacked by one of these "snake-women". In the Libyan desert, a region destitute of inhabitants, Dio Chrysostom tells dwelled a form of terrifying man-eating monsters:

> The face was that of a woman – a beautiful woman – the breasts and bosom and the neck were very beautiful too, the like of which neither mortal maiden nor bride in her prime could have, nor any sculptor or painter could copy. The colour of their skin was most radiant; and when people beheld them, friendliness and desire passed through the eyes and insinuated themselves into their souls. The rest of the body was hard with scales that could not be broken, and the whole lower part was snake, ending in a snake's utterly shameless head.[162]

These creatures concealed the lower, snake-like, parts of their bodies, and made men who were passing aroused by giving them a glimpse of their beautiful faces and breasts. As the men approached them, they remained motionless: "… often looking down, mimicking a decent woman".[163] As soon as they were within reach, the "snake-women" would clasp their victims with claw-like hands, after which the serpent part would sting them. Their dead bodies were then devoured.

The second part of the story tells of two young men from a Greek envoy who see a "woman" looking like a local Libyan sitting on a sand dune. She "… showed her bosom and breasts …" and the young men simply assumed she was a prostitute. Although this supposedly took place in the past, the reader or listener would probably think of the present. In Rome, some women who sold sex, common prostitutes, would show their breasts to attract customers. Both men rushed towards her, and the one reaching her first was dragged into a hole and then devoured. The other called for help, but was attacked by the snake part and killed.[164]

The attitudes towards prostitution were ambivalent in Roman society. It appears that few were entirely positive to prostitution; Martial (AD 38/41–101/104), however, claimed that youngsters were made men by visiting a brothel.[165] Cicero (106–43 BC) argued it was common, natural and by no means illegal for young men to visit prostitutes – in other words, it was a necessary evil.[166] Yet others – among which we find the Stoic Musonius Rufus (before AD 30–before 101) and his pupil Dio Chrysostom – were markedly negative.[167] The latter contended that prostitution was a dirty and shameful business: one that ought to be banned by law. Those who run brothels "… feel

no shame before man or god …" and argues that prostitution is an outright insult to those gods who protect marriage and child-birth.[168]

The moral message conveyed by Dio Chrysostom in the story about the "snake-women" in the Libyan desert is clear: being governed by passions and lust is not merely negative, it poses an outright threat to the individual and society alike. Those who give in to lust risk facing a fearful fate, much like the young men who fell victim to these mythological monsters.[169]

7.3 Mythological Creatures and Courtesans

In literary texts of different dates – Classical Greek, Hellenistic and Roman – courtesans are sometimes associated with and likened to female monsters and demons.[170] Equally, in the ancient texts these monsters and demons were occasionally equated with prostitutes.[171] Similarly, prostitutes were often compared with wild beasts – wolves and lions in particular – that is, animals noted for their aggressiveness.[172] This was a reflection of how the sexuality of prostitutes was perceived – namely as active and therefore aggressive – in every way the opposite of the passivity expected of married women.[173] Man-eating demons such as *empousai*, *lamiai* and "ass-women" hence embody the fear of uncontrolled female sexuality.

These characters were based on both oral and literary traditions, and represent the merging of two different figures: on the one hand, a supernatural creature which formed part of the oral tradition, and on the other hand, a literary figure of the Second Sophistic: the "Hellenistic" courtesan.[174] The description of the *empousa* in Flavius Philostratus' *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* is characteristic of a courtesan – a "Greek" *hetaira* – she is described as a well-dressed and beautiful woman.[175] Most probably, she is modelled on the famous Corinthian courtesan Laïs.[176]

Like many of the courtesans – and also Roman prostitutes – the *empousa* is said to stem from a foreign country, in this case Phoenicia.[177] The story takes place in Corinth, a city so famous – or rather infamous – for its prostitutes,[178] that the Greeks made a verb out of it, *korinthiazein* "to fornicate".[179] In this town, the *empousa* owned her own house, also typical of a courtesan,[180] a house she wants young Menippus to visit, and she says:

> "When you arrive this evening, you will hear my song as I sing to you, and there is wine such as you never drank, no rival in love will trouble you, and the beautiful woman will live with the beautiful man".[181]

*Hetaira*s could often be skilled musicians who entertained their clients.[182] Some of the most successful courtesans might have only one single client,

who would pay a hefty sum to have no rivals. Here the situation is reversed, however, for these female demons long, not for the men's money, but rather hunger for their flesh; courtesans on the other hand did not devour their clients, but, it was argued, left them destitute.

The latter view is advocated by Heraclitus the paradoxographer (late first or second century AD) – who in fact was not a writer of paradoxography, but rightly ought to be termed mythographer[183] – in his *On Unbelievable Tales* of different mythological characters, for instance the Sirens:

> On the Sirens
>
> The legend goes that these were of double form, with the legs of birds but [the rest] was the body of a woman, and they killed those who sailed past. But they were [actually] prostitutes, remarkable for their playing of instruments and their sweet voices. They were most beautiful, and they devoured the property of those who associated with them. They were said to have the legs of birds, because they quickly got rid of those who threw away their property.[184]

The "ass-women" in Lucian's *A True Story* are reminiscent of the *empousa* found in Flavius Philostratus' *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* – with demons resembling beautiful courtesans:

> It was inhabited by women – or so we thought – who spoke Greek. For they approached us and received us hospitably and embraced us. They were adorned like courtesans (*hetairikôs*), with tunics falling down and trailing after them on the ground, and all of them were beautiful and youthful.[185]

Sailors and other strangers visiting the island Witchery and the town Watertown were ensnared with the help of sex and wine; in Roman times wine and sex were associated with women of ill repute,[186] and when the young men had fallen asleep these creatures fed on their flesh. The underlying symbolic meaning, or moral message, of this story is made clear by the author. Consorting with the wrong type of women – be they courtesans or indeed any woman with whom a legal marriage could not be formed – inevitably lead to the "death" of the family.

In contrast to the well-clad *empousai* cast on the Second Sophistic's image of the "Hellenistic" courtesan discussed above, Dio Chrysostom's story of man-eating demons set in the Libyan desert depicts a completely different type of prostitute: "… with a tanned skin thrown over her, as the Libyan women wore ..".[187] The men therefore simply assumed that they were prostitutes from a local village.

As mentioned above, it is not only the case that the demons were associated with prostitutes, it also worked the other way around: prostitutes were in different ways equated with man-eating monsters. On the basis of the

older Greek sources, it is clear that demeaning designations such as *Empousa* were given to women regarded as promiscuous. In Demosthenes (384/83–322 BC) speech *On the Crown*, he puts forth the argument that his opponent's mother was not known by her name Glaucothea, but by the name Empousa, thereby implying that she was a prostitute.[188] Athenaeus (fl. *c.* AD 200) – one of the most important authors of the Second Sophistic – quotes Anaxilas (fourth century BC) who likened prostitutes with a number of different mythological monsters:

> "Any man who has ever loved a courtesan could not point out a more lawless class. For what implacable dragon, what fire-breathing Chimaera, or Carybdis, or three-headed Scylla, the sea-bitch, the Sphinx, Hydra, lioness, viper, the winged flocks of Harpies, have succeeded in surpassing that abominable class? It is not possible; they surpass all evils".[189]

The physical appearance of courtesans was also compared with that of fearful monsters. From the literary evidence it is clear that the courtesans in the Hellenistic period wore not only make-up and beautiful clothes to improve their looks, they used artificial means such as specially designed shoes and clothes to manipulate the way their bodies looked.[190] The *empousa* figure in *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* brings this one step further: she seems to be an attractive and well-dressed woman, whereas in actual fact she is simply an illusion made out of thin air.[191] The man-eating monsters in Dio Chrysostom's *Discourses* conceal their claw-like hands and serpentine lower body covered with scales, displaying instead their beautiful faces, breasts and bosom.[192]

In one of the medical author Galen's (AD 129–199/216) many works we find a story of the famous Greek courtesan Phryne's natural beauty put in contrast to other *hetaira*s' true looks, that is, hideous beneath all make-up and pretty clothing. In a game at a symposium, the participants took turns ordering each other to perform daring tasks, and Phryne made all the other participating *hetaira*s wash off their make-up. Rather than revealing beauty, they were covered with blemishes, writes Galen, and resembled *mormolukai*, that is monstrous man-eating demons.[193]

7.4 Passion, Anger, and Fear

A fundamental focus of the various philosophical schools was controlling, or sometimes extirpating, emotions perceived as harmful, such as anger, fear and passion. Several schools, such as the Stoics and Epicureans, also regarded erotic love as most people experience it as an exercise in self-torture, devoid of any merit in the philosophical pursuit of virtue.[194] Despite this, in

The Life of Apollonius of Tyana, the young student of philosophy Menippus, who is described as being intelligent, still falls victim to his feelings: "… for even though he was otherwise eager to do philosophy, he gave in to his passion".[195] From a philosophical perspective, however, this was only to be expected: representatives of many schools regarded young men as inherently impulsive and passionate by nature, unable to fully control their feelings. More specifically, for Pythagoras (b. *c.* 550 BC), a man was not to be considered mature until he reached the age of forty.[196]

Menippus is described as deeply in love, he blushes in the presence of his future wife: a pale complexion suddenly shifting to a blush was seen as a sure sign of love.[197] He thinks that she is also in love with him, and says to Apollonius who questions his motives for marrying this "woman": "… it would be wonderful to marry a woman who loves you".[198] Apollonius, a man not only wise and experienced – but above all a trained philosopher of mature age – was able to see the world as it actually was. What appeared to be a beautiful woman is demonstrated by him to be a murderous monster, a man-eating demon:

> They fall in love and indulge in lust, but most of all they love the flesh of human beings, and they decoy those on whom they wish to feast with sexual pleasures.[199]

In late Republican and Early Imperial Roman society where marriages, at least within the elite, were arranged, love of the passionate kind had very little to do with marriage.[200] Love was even conceived of as potentially dangerous – a disease or form of insanity – and not only in literature;[201] there are even passages concerning this malady in medical works.[202] In philosophy, Lucretius, for instance, spoke of love as a form of *rabies* "madness".[203] Are we to see young Menippus' love as being not only irrational from a philosophical perspective, but rather revealing a temporary insanity that is cured by Apollonius?

Or is the story to be seen as a cautionary comment on contemporary views on marital love? It can be noted that *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* is more or less contemporaneous with some of the so-called Greek novels, that is, adventurous love stories of Roman date written in Greek. These texts give a very different view of love and marriage – and the relation between the sexes – one in which passionate love leads to marriage.

Michel Foucault discussed these texts in his work *Histoire de la sexualité* [*The History of Sexuality*], arguing that we see a shift in attitude to love and marriage in Roman society, one of greater equality or "sexual symmetry".[204] David Konstan explored Foucault's ideas in *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres*, arguing that what we see in these texts is

not Roman reality but a literary construction.[205] Literary convention or not, these texts reveal a change in sentiment towards love and marriage. *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* propagates a more traditional view – that love could lead to serious problems for young men – counter to the positive outlook on love found in the Greek novels.

In contrast to the young Menippus' dreams of marriage in *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Socrates was seduced by Meroe in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, and he never intended anything but a sexual relationship. Sexual desire – the ultimate cause of Socrates' downfall and death – was commonly considered a powerfully destructive force. It obviously threatened a person's virtue and honour, but was also thought to have a negative influence on their health and wellbeing, apparent in Socrates' appearance. The control of desire came to form a social scale on which people were judged, and a high degree of self-restraint was an ideal in Stoic thought.[206]

The Epicureans were also eloquent on the hazards of love. The problem with erotic love, Lucretius tells us, is that it creates total dependency on a single person, on whom all our hopes and desires are focused, and the burden of our whole happiness rests. Moreover, the Stoics would continue, this dependency is the result of an intellectual fallacy, namely that our personal self-fulfilment can depend on the thoughts and emotions of someone else, and not on our own ways of handling the situation.[207] Their token example of this fallacy, Medea, is particularly pertinent in this context, as she embodies both the appeal and destructive powers of the witch, wherefore her case will be discussed at some length. In addition, the same kind of thoughts in Medea that produces this fallacious reasoning also seems to partially underlie Meroe's reactions to Socrates' desertion of her, making the comparison doubly apt.

Despite the fact that Meroe prefers to think of herself as a latter-day Calypso – the much more peaceful nymph in the *Odyssey* who finally accepts that Odysseus leaves her and her island for his own home and hearth in Ithaca – she actually resembles Medea to a much higher, and by herself largely unacknowledged, degree. Meroe prefers to liken herself to unmarried women, not lawfully wedded wives such as Medea. In his *Discourses*, Epictetus (*c.* AD 50–125) discusses Medea, and frames the fallacy as an expression of her belief in the paramount profitability of revenging herself on Jason over and against caring for her children, even though she recognises she will also be punishing herself in the end:

> – What of her who says, "And while I know the evils I intend to do, my anger (*thumos*) is more powerful than my deliberate resolutions?"
>
> Because she holds it more profitable to humour her anger and take vengeance on her husband than to save her children from death.

> – Yes, but she is thoroughly deceived.
>
> – Show her distinctly that she is thoroughly deceived and she will not do it; but so long as you do not show it, what does she have to follow if not that which appears to her to be true?
>
> – Nothing.
>
> – Really, why are you angry with her, because the miserable woman is deceived in the greatest of concerns, and has been transformed from a human being into a viper? Why do you not, if anything, rather pity her? As we pity the blind and the lame, why do we not in the same manner pity those who have been blinded and lamed in their governing faculties?[208]

Medea values her love for Jason, and her own desire for revenge, more highly than the well-being of her children, because she suffers from the false impression that Jason can give her personal self-fulfilment, and because no one has bothered to tell her otherwise. She has not been properly educated to avoid relying on capricious external things for her happiness, and the results of this lack of education are all too evident. In another passage, Epictetus' advice to Medea is to give up wanting to keep her husband and have him live with her no matter what, and to give up wanting to live in Corinth. By freeing herself from her emotional dependency on him, and wanting only what god wants for her, she will receive whatever she desires.[209]

Like Medea, Meroe is also craving for revenge, a vengeance she takes out on Aristomenes; with him being forced into exile, this must have entailed the destruction of his family. In the case of Socrates – whose family had already ceased to exist during his long absence, as they believed he was dead – Meroe's vengeance is of a vicious kind: for him she reserves a violent death and denies him proper burial rites. In fact, she has disrupted and destroyed a number of families, Socrates' and Aristomenes' families being only two in a long row.

To what extent Meroe was emotionally dependent on Socrates is less clear; she eloquently speaks of her grief when he is planning to leave her, but she does not appear to dote on him at all while he stays with her. Nevertheless, Meroe and Medea exhibit the same drive to control their lovers, which in Medea ultimately springs from her dependency on Jason.[210] As for Meroe, the traditional association between witches and love in the Roman world might be enough to account for this preoccupation with love: in earlier instances, as we have seen, Meroe boldly defended her erotic interests against outside intervention.[211] Perhaps Meroe is simply more smitten with the idea of love than with Socrates himself.

Furthermore, Meroe and Medea are both murderous in their quest for revenge; in Apuleius, this lust for vengeance is explicitly related to the mythical image of the Furies, but Medea could be a point of reference as well. Scholars

have previously remarked on the affinities between Meroe's "sacrifice" of Socrates and Medea's rejuvenation of Jason's father Aeson.[212] In Ovid's account in the *Metamorphoses*, Medea slits Aeson's throat, draining out the old blood and replacing it with the juices of magical herbs. Aeson regains his vigour, and suddenly appears to be forty years younger.[213] Then she insinuates herself into the confidence of the daughters of Pelias, the half-uncle and king of Iolcus who sent Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece to begin with.

Medea tells the girls of her exploits in rejuvenating Aeson, and they beg her to do the same for their father. Medea agrees, but omits to include the life-giving juices of the magical herbs, replacing them with ones without power. She orders the girls to let Pelias' old blood, corrupted as it is with age, with the swords she gives them, on the pretence that she cannot otherwise fill him with the new, rejuvenating juices. His daughters do, and Medea finally jugulates him and throws him in her bronze cauldron. Naturally, he remains dead.[214]

Meroe and Panthia's treatment of Socrates would lie somewhere mid-way between these two extremes of rejuvenation and premeditated slaughter. The end result is the same as in Pelias' case, but the magical sponge is at least temporarily revitalising, albeit far from rejuvenating. But the ultimate purpose of cutting Socrates' throat – beyond being a grisly revenge – was to collect his blood to use for magical purposes, possibly to use in the rejuvenation of Meroe herself.[215]

Regardless of the line of reasoning behind their actions, both Meroe and Medea submit to the cultural imperative of focusing their love on a single person, and this leads them to commit horrible crimes when their expectations are frustrated. Medea has been styled as the "antithesis of the ideal Stoic sage" in her determination to be dependent on others for her happiness.[216] The Stoic sage would not cling to a single person as she does: he would show equal interest in all virtuous individuals, and, for him, the right kind of love is the love of virtue, not of mere physical beauty.[217]

This good love aims for friendship and social bonding, not simply physical satisfaction.[218] Neither Meroe nor Medea have grasped this, but have been taken in by the mere physical beauty of youthful bodies. Menippus makes the same mistake; he is blinded by the radiant beauty of the *empousa*, and fails to perceive her vicious nature. He is also prone to another piece of folly often attributed to people in love: their wilful determination not to listen to rational argument. The Stoic Chrysippus of Soli (*c.* 280–207 BC) describes this eloquently:

> "And on this account, such speech is heard from lovers and those who desire violently in other ways – and from the angry – that they want to indulge in their anger, and be left alone whether it is good for them or not; and that

> we should say nothing to them, and because this [thing] must be done by all means available, even if they are totally mistaken and it is inexpedient for them". […] The beloveds too most certainly deem themselves worthy of receiving this tribute from their lovers: of their being in the most thoughtless state without paying attention to reason; and moreover, that they ought to transgress against any words of good advice, or rather should not endure listening to anything of the kind.[219]

The first time they meet, Menippus behaves just as the person in love depicted in this passage, as he is quite unwilling to listen to Apollonius' objections against his imminent marriage. At the wedding ceremony, the *empousa* also plays the part projected for the beloved, as she pretends to feel appalled by Apollonius' words, and regards philosophers as "always speaking foolishly". Conceivably, she thinks Menippus should not stand listening to such nonsense either.

The *empousa* is not represented as consumed by anger as Meroe is, but this might be due to the fact that she is never explicitly spurned by Menippus in the story. In the ancient world, anger was an emotion particularly attributed to women. As the "weaker sex", women were viewed as generally more susceptible to emotions, and to anger in particular. Their anger also tended to be directed at members of their family, and at their subordinates such as slaves. Although the stereotype of the angry woman is primarily Greek, it is pertinent to Apuleius' story as well, as it is set in Thessaly.[220] The similarities with Medea also call for keeping the stereotype in mind, since Medea was considered a prime example of a person submitting to anger.

Erotic love and anger were sometimes perceived as teamed emotions. They are often mentioned in conjunction, as in the quotation from Chrysippus cited above. Aristotle stated that the suffering imposed by love, along with other more physical afflictions, prepared the way for anger, when love was unrequited and the person felt slighted.[221] In Euripides' *Medea*, the overpowering passion Medea feels for Jason turns into anger and lust for revenge when she is slighted, and perhaps not so much because her love is disappointed, but due to the profound injustice she suffers at Jason's hands.[222] Both erotic love and anger were also regarded as a form of madness.[223] Since Greek *cholos* "anger", *thumos* "wrath", and *orgê* "rage", as well as Latin *ira* "ire, anger", and *furor*, "fury", were construed as extremely intense emotions, as was Greek *erôs* "love" and Latin *amor* "love",[224] the association with madness is not all that far-fetched. The association seems to be archaic; in the *Iliad*, we also find an intermediate emotion between anger and madness in *lussa* "battle frenzy", which, in Greek tragedy, became a principal word for madness more generally.[225]

In the face of this raging passion and anger, keeping a tight rein on one's emotions is difficult. Aristomenes and Socrates utterly fail, as both finally fear the rage of Meroe. Earlier on in the narrative, Socrates' fear of Meroe has also driven out any passion he might have felt for her, in line with Aristotle's argument that fear expels love.[226] In Philostratus' story, Menippus' reactions are not really described, as the focus is on Apollonius, the mature philosopher, who is presented as able to face – with considerable calm – the threat posed by a deadly demon.

Despite Meroe's ambivalence to marriage, her pseudo-marriage to Socrates nevertheless raises the issue of a "wife's" duties to her "husband". In general, a wife was expected to put up with the "little errors" of her husband.[227] Getting angry was not considered appropriate, not even getting annoyed. Simultaneously, as Aristotle said, we are more inclined to be angry with our dear ones and friends, our *philoi*, because we feel they owe us respect.[228] It has been suggested that it is this very fact that made wives angry with their husbands.[229]

Telling these stories about young men who did not know what was best for them, their families or society – instead they were governed by lust and could be lured into a relation that in the stories could cost them their lives – clearly had a moral purpose. Dio Chrysostom – after telling the story of monstrous, but beautiful, man-eating half-women dwelling in the Libyan desert – states as much:

> This myth has not been made up for a child to make it less rash and undisciplined, but for those who possess greater and more complete thoughtlessness […] whenever we love either luxury or property or sexual pleasures …[230]

Thus, the stories could be used to inculcate the prudence of adhering to conventional family values. More interesting for us, however, is that they were part of a therapeutic program, according to the author. They could be employed to demonstrate the nature of desires or passions, that they were irrational (*alogoi*) and brutish (*thêriôdeis*), and that they beguiled fools with pleasures, which are rather deceits (*apatê*) and forms of bewitchment (*goêteia*) than real pleasures. Moreover, these poor fools are being destroyed in a most lamentable and pitiable fashion. Therefore, it is necessary to keep these bad examples before our eyes, to make us dread (*dedienai*) falling into the same misfortune.[231]

7.5 Negative Description, Metaphors, Catharsis and Critical Spectatorship

Thus, the main object of therapy in these stories would be erotic love, because of the dangers it poses both to the individual and to society. Accordingly, if erotic love is a kind of madness that needs to be cured, and lovers steadfastly refuse to listen to reason, going out of their way to avoid coming to their senses, the proposed therapy must be radical to be effective. We suggest that this is the therapeutic aim of a particular and very striking feature of the narratives, namely the negative descriptions of the *empousa* in Philostratus, and Meroe in Apuleius. We can understand this therapeutic technique by comparing it to Epicurean ones on the one hand, and to the modern use of metaphor in therapy on the other.

Both the Epicurean and modern techniques aim to create a reflexive distance to whatever is perceived as a problem, and to use this new distance to disentangle us from the emotions and behaviours contributing to the problem's survival, by scrutinising them from new points of view. In our account, we will focus on this therapeutic endeavour on two levels: within the narrative, on the one hand, and in relation to the responses of the audience, on the other.

One of our best sources for the Epicurean technique is Lucretius' famous diatribe on love. Primarily, Lucretius recommends averting one's thoughts elsewhere when erotic passion threatens to engulf the mind, or to seek satisfaction from just about anyone; the important point is to avoid dependency on a single person, which is tantamount to reserving anxiety and certain pain for oneself. Failing this, he suggests using what we might call the method of negative description. Lucretius ironically observes that many men have a tendency to idealise their beloved, by disregarding all the faults of mind and body of their darlings. The "dirty and stinking woman" is affectionately called "disorderly", the "sinewy and withered" is a "gazelle", the woman who "is too thin to live" is a "slender little love", etc. By giving them the labels they actually deserve, and not ones deriving from poetry, the emotional attachment can be broken;[232] use of hyperbole is also recommended, as in the following example:

> As everybody knows, she does the same things – and we know she does – as an ugly woman, and the wretch exudes foul odours; her maid-servants shy away from her and laugh aloud in secret. But the weeping, excluded lover often covers the thresholds with flowers and garlands, and smears the lofty door-posts with marjoram, and miserably fixes kisses on the door. But if he is actually admitted, and just one whiff of air hits against him as he comes, out of respectability he will seek an opportunity to leave and the complaint long

> rehearsed and deeply affirmed will falter. Then he will condemn himself for his folly, as he sees he has attributed to her more than is proper to concede to a mortal.[233]

The beloved is no longer being adored as a goddess rather than a mortal woman, as she truly is. Men's divinisation of their beloved is singled out as an obstacle to a good relationship, as it fosters deception and illusion on both sides: the woman must keep up a façade to fulfil her lover's expectations, and the man must live with the creeping suspicion that she is hiding something from him. Martha Nussbaum has also argued that this divinisation is to blame for the bizarre behaviour of lovers in love-making, which Lucretius views as attributable to their irrational desire for fusion or union with the other;[234] if the beloved is not a mere mortal woman, but a goddess in the eyes of the lover, the inevitable failure to achieve a complete fusion will be all the more frustrating when the prospect is one of possessing a goddess.[235]

In Philostratus' story, this theme of illusions in love is even further amplified, as the *empousa* tries to ensnare Menippus with the aid of magical illusions; the site of the wedding reception, the *empousa*'s home, is decorated with magically contrived embellishments, and the servants, food and wine are all illusory and disappear before the rebukes of Apollonius. Moreover, the *empousa* really is trying to hide something from Menippus, like the "Venuses" in Lucretius' poem: the horrible truth about her real nature. This horrible truth is not the same in the two cases; the *empousa* is trying to conceal her supranormal otherness, while the reason for the cover-up in Lucretius is considerably more mundane. The foul odours of the passage long puzzled scholars, with explanations ranging from flatulence[236] to medical fumigations for gynaecological complaints;[237] with Martha Nussbaum, we regard menstruation as a more likely candidate, as it is presented as something affecting all women.[238]

The first time Menippus and Apollonius meet, Apollonius states that Menippus is a beautiful, young man, and that he is being hunted by beautiful women, but in this case, he is being cherished by a serpent, and he is cherishing a serpent. While others speak of the *empousa* as a beautiful and very graceful woman, Apollonius prefers to describe her in negative terms as a serpent, as if to shake Menippus out of his love-struck complacency. He is not very successful, however, for even though Menippus is surprised at his choice of words, he never pauses to reflect on what it might mean. Menippus is determined to marry the woman, no matter what, and he might be said to be deliberately rejecting reason. He is not even deterred when Apollonius says the lady is of a kind you cannot marry. As we saw above, this is probably a

reference to her perceived social status as comparable to that of a courtesan, but it is also impossible to enter a legitimate marriage with an *empousa*.

At the wedding party, Apollonius exposes the *empousa* for what she truly is: a man-eating demon. It turns out she is not even necessarily in love with Menippus, but is primarily fattening him with pleasures to make him more palatable when she is ready to devour him; in this story, the desire to devour the beloved is given an unusually concrete twist. By revealing her true identity, and the chilling fate she had in store for Menippus, we suggest Apollonius tries to help Menippus conquer his tender feelings for her, and make him strong enough to liberate himself from her.

Given the positions of otherness attributed to the women in our stories, the witch Meroe and the nameless *empousa*, they and their lovers will never enjoy the kind of love that Lucretius recommends: one that rests on the acknowledgement of each partner's human traits and limits, and the pursuit of mutual – not one-sided – pleasure. Ultimately, this kind of quiet, contented love, born out of habit, outlives passionate desire, just as a drop of liquid falling on rocks for a long time eventually perforates the stone.[239] Perhaps this was the love Socrates enjoyed in his relationship with his lawfully wedded wife, though Apuleius does not make explicit mention of it.

From the point of view of modern therapy, Meroe and the *empousa* also function as metaphors. As metaphors often do, the witch and the man-eating demon stand in for threats against male reproduction and the survival of the family. It is also precisely as metaphors – rather than literal representations of real threats – that they can provide the necessary distance for reflecting on the dangers of erotic love. The metaphor opens a reflexive space, which encourages the audience to contemplate erotic passion, scrutinising its drawbacks and advantages from many different points of view. Through the use of metaphor, it is also possible to manipulate distance – sometimes moving closer to erotic passion in our scrutiny, at other times moving away from it – while remaining in full command of ourselves and our emotions.[240]

For people in the grip of passion, the distance created by reliance on the metaphors of the witch and the *empousa* affords the opportunity to reflect on the situation by discriminating between the content of their lives (the details of their love affairs) and the process of getting there. If you are madly in love, you might be too caught up in the situation to see how and why it happened, and whether it is what you really want in your life. By creating that reflexive distance, you no longer react blindly but can act with deliberation, and with a better understanding of the way you personally function in such situations.[241]

In this context, the exaggerated nature of the metaphors may be helpful. These figures, especially Meroe, are larger-than-life; they have been iconically

augmented.[242] This means that they "depict reality by augmenting it", condensing, amplifying and shaping the bits and pieces already present in our daily lives and conversations into powerful symbols of more general import. This augmentation allows for an imaginative investigation of situations in which the audience too might find itself, an important function of narrative.[243]

This brings us to the issue of the emplotment of the stories, and the expected emotional responses of the audience. The analysis is complicated by several factors, the first being the tensions and differences between literary and folkloric aspects of the stories, the second – which is particularly pertinent to Apuleius – being their mixed emotional makeup, drawing on features often associated with several different ancient literary genres, most importantly tragedy and comedy, and the speech genre of humour, which could also assume a literary form.

The story of Socrates and Aristomenes is, of course, intended as entertainment as it is part of a comic novel,[244] and it explains the many comic elements present in it. However, by deliberately juxtaposing these comic elements with rather horrendous ones – for instance, the extreme violence of the witches' attack at the inn with Aristomenes metaphorically transformed into a tortoise under the bed – Apuleius could elicit multiple emotions in the audience. To facilitate discussion, these elements and emotions will be labelled "comic" and "tragic" as they figure as such in Aristotle's *Poetics*, though they would not be solely restricted to the confines of these particular ancient literary genres.

Beginning with elements of the plot, one of the main differences between tragedy and comedy, according to Aristotle, is the nature of the people they purport to represent: in tragedy, the focus is on people superior to us, while in comedy it is on people inferior to us;[245] this would hold for Roman tragedy and comedy as well. In this respect, Socrates and Aristomenes are more akin to comic characters, because they cannot be said to be superior to the reader in the sense of belonging to some mythical heroic past.

While the story exhibits these comic traits, a more "tragic" plot is enacted, moving from good fortune in the beginning of the story to a very bad ending, and the heroes fall victim to adversity through some kind of error (*hamartia*), not some innate wickedness,[246] as they are good people at heart. Some might say Socrates brought it on himself by permitting himself to sleep with Meroe – as we recall, that is Aristomenes' initial reaction – but this does not mean that Socrates would be perceived as evil, but rather as fallible. The comic plot also avoids portraying pain and destruction, which constitute the sorry lot of our heroes, since that is no longer funny, whereas tragedy depicts suffering.[247]

The "tragic" bent of the plot might encourage viewing the events as pitiable and fearful, the emotions elicited by tragedy. Pity is felt for someone understood as undeserving of his evil fate, while fear is felt for someone who is akin to us.[248] The audience of Apuleius' story could respond with pity for Socrates and Aristomenes who might have their faults, and they might certainly have erred, but their punishment appears somewhat excessive. Correspondingly, the audience might feel fear for them, as they are perceived as like themselves, engendering the question: are we so different, after all? Thus, the audience could feel pity and fear for these specific characters, but they could also generalise those emotions to include pity and fear for others in similar quandaries; for human vulnerability in general; or for themselves and their family and friends:[249] could this happen to me or someone I know?[250] Could I be blinded by erotic passion and fall into such misfortune?

The story allows the audience to explore these existential questions, and to imaginatively insert themselves into the heroes' positions. This kind of "narrative play" provides a safe environment in which to experience such existential possibilities, i.e., to explore our limitations as human beings within the safe confines of its being make-believe. This makes it seem less threatening, even while it promotes our self-understanding in a fashion that is non-destructive, both to ourselves and to others. It also makes us sensitive to the suffering of others, and preserves us from "a hard arrogant feeling of self-sufficiency that would in many ways mar our dealings with others in life".[251]

Turning to the relations between literary and folkloric aspects of the story, its folk-legend-like qualities reinforce this narrative play. The plots of oral legends are often a form of narrative play; legends typically propose a certain set of actions to counteract a particular threat – in this case, the proposed action is trying to flee from the clutches of the evil witches – and then evaluate the success or failure of this specific strategy; in our case, it is a complete failure. Implicitly, the best course of action in Apuleius' story is to avoid this situation – and the witch – altogether; maybe it is preferable to be killed by robbers. As many oral legends also do, the story issues a warning: do not enter into any kind of relationship with unknown women, you never know which one of them might turn out to be a witch.[252]

By furnishing a safe space for exploring these strategies for action, the legend (and by implication Apuleius' story) allows the audience to imaginatively test several different courses of action, evaluating the efficacy of each. Here it is important to remember that storytellers have much leeway in selecting and evaluating the resolution of a legend; a particular outcome, whether positive or negative, may be favoured in the tradition, but each teller is free to remould it to his or her own taste, as far as the legend audience

allows.[253] In other words, Apuleius was not constrained by existing variants of the story in tailoring his own ending to it.

It might be useful to contrast it in this respect to a modern Greek variant from Messenia, in which the heroes actually succeed in ridding themselves of the witches:

> Once upon a time a man was passing the night at the house of a friend whose household consisted of his wife and mother-in-law. About midnight some noise awakened him, and listening intently he made out the voices of the two women conversing together. What he heard terrified him, for they were planning to eat himself or his host, whichever proved the fatter. At once he perceived that his friend's wife and mother-in-law were Striges, and knowing that there was no means of escaping the danger that was threatening him, he determined to try to save himself by guile.
>
> The Striges advanced towards the sleeping men and took hold of their guest's foot to see if it was heavy, and consequently fat and good for eating; he however, understanding their purpose, raised his foot of his own accord as they took it in their hands and weighed it, so that it felt to them as light as a feather, and they let it drop again disappointed. Then they took hold of the foot of the man who was sleeping, and naturally found it very heavy. Delighted at the result of their investigation, they ripped open the wretched man's breast, pulled out his liver and other parts, and threw them among the hot ashes on the hearth to cook. Then noticing that they had no wine, they flew to the wine-shop, took what they wanted and returned.
>
> But in the interval, the guest got up, collected the flesh that was being cooked, stowed it away in his pouch, and put in its place on the hearth some animal's dung. The Striges however ate up greedily what was on the hearth, complaining only that it was somewhat over-done. The next day the two friends rose and left the house; the victim of the previous night was very pale, but he did not bear the slightest wound or scar on his breast. He remarked to his companion that he was feeling excessively hungry, and the other gave him what had been cooked during the night, which he ate and found exceedingly invigorating; the blood mounted to his cheeks and he was perfectly sound again. Thereupon his friend told him what had happened during the night, and they went together and slew the Striges.[254]

In the Messenian story, the host is indeed butchered by his wife and mother-in-law, just as Socrates is, but as his friend has managed to retrieve his entrails for him, he can be successfully healed by ingesting them, becoming fully reinvigorated. This makes it possible for the two friends to turn on the witches and kill them. Aristomenes manages to do no such thing, lying in fear underneath his cot, and therefore Socrates cannot be saved. We suggest the story's warning function overrides the possibility of a happier ending, quite

apart from its being cast as the first-person narrative of Aristomenes himself, providing a rationale for his itinerant life.

The warning function of the narrative is an underlying theme in the allopathic conception of catharsis as well. As mentioned in Chapter 4.1, most interpretations of catharsis surmise that the tragic emotions of pity and fear act on similar emotions within the audience. The allopathic process envisioned during the Renaissance, which has been adapted by Elizabeth Belfiore in her account of tragic pleasures, suggests that tragic pity and fear constitute the antidote to their opposites, shamelessness and fearlessness.[255]

On this view, observing the pitiful and fearful events of tragedy educates the emotions of the audience by making it replace the shamelessness and fearlessness with which it all too frequently reacts to such events in real life, with the proper emotional response to such evil circumstances, namely pity and fear.[256] Consequently, by witnessing the evil fates of Socrates and Aristomenes due to their errors, we will take caution to avoid such behaviour ourselves, and learn to feel compassion for them as fallible human beings rather than merely pour scorn on them.

This brings us to the strain of comedy in the narrative. On this point, Aristotle is decidedly unhelpful, as the discussion on comedy he advertises in the *Poetics* has not survived. We do not know what emotion(s) he considered appropriate to comedy. On the basis of the *Tractatus Coislinianus*, regarded by some scholars as a summary of the missing discussion,[257] "pleasure and laughter" have been proffered as the comic emotions.[258] Others have dismissed it as an unlikely statement of Aristotle's views, as it fails to conform to the double character of the tragic emotions, as simultaneously part of the plot and of the emotional response of the audience.[259]

Thus, other emotions have been advocated as the comic emotions, for example anger and envy,[260] *Schadenfreude*,[261] or righteous indignation (*nemesan*).[262] Both envy (*phthonos*) and indignation are reactions to the undeserved good fortune of others, which is hardly applicable to Socrates and Aristomenes. If indignation is more broadly understood as an acknowledgement of some ridiculous inappropriateness in human behaviour, and constitutes our emotional response to such a trespass,[263] it is more relevant but still not sufficient to explain the humorous aspects of the story.

Instead we must look to discussions on the specifically Roman cast of humour. A fundamental trait of much Roman humour is its aggressiveness, which accounts for the proliferation of such quintessentially Roman phenomena as rape jokes,[264] jokes about the excruciating torture of slaves[265] and about the disabled.[266] A common denominator for all of these jokes is the threatening, usually male, figure who pours his scorn and abuse (both

psychological and physical)[267] on a subordinate figure apprehended as abnormal or deviant in some way, whether sexually, socially or physically.[268]

What is important for our purposes is that this figure can also be inverted: he can become enfeebled, humiliated, stained by foul substances.[269] This anti-hero becomes a victim to the violence he would normally inflict on someone else. This describes the positions of Socrates and Aristomenes fairly well: Socrates is physically violated, whereas Aristomenes is stained by a foul substance: the witches' urine. Correspondingly, the witches emerge as wanton and vengeful, usurping the rightful place of the dominant male (see Chapter 7.1).

If the audience perceived themselves as superior to Socrates and Aristomenes, this detachment may have fostered laughter at their expense; if not, temporarily identifying themselves with Apuleius' characters might have furnished some titillating excitement, as the audience could remain secure in the belief that this fate was unlikely to befall themselves. On another level, recognising the deviancy of such unmanly men as Aristomenes and Socrates, and promiscuous women such as Meroe and Panthia, could imply achieving sexual power over them,[270] permitting the audience to assume the position of the dominant figure, and enjoy a sense of mastery over these deviant individuals.

Based on psychoanalytic theory, some scholars have argued that this kind of humour gives vent to hostile emotions, accomplishing a sublimation of them into a socially acceptable form; thus, it would be cathartic in the sense of purging these emotions.[271] From the perspective of modern therapy, however, mere purgation would not be considered therapeutic, any more than mere scapegoating is. Even though some psychologists view the expression of emotion in and of itself as therapeutic,[272] few actually endorse this proposition without further qualification. Generally, the emotion would have to be worked through,[273] find new and more constructive outlets, or be supplanted by other thoughts and emotions in the course of reorienting oneself to a more rewarding life.[274] Consequently, using Apuleius' story as a means of understanding ourselves would, on this view, be essential for a truly therapeutic outcome.

Yet this does not imply that we have to condone the heroes' choices in life, or wholeheartedly swallow the rationale behind their actions, or their values. Here Epictetus' Stoic conception of what has been termed "critical spectatorship" might be relevant. It has been argued that the fellow-feeling and identification usually regarded as the backbone of the experience of poetry, and by extension of prose narrative as well – which occasioned Plato's vehement attack on poetry in the *Republic* – were replaced by a more detached

reforming zeal and compassion in Epictetus. Tragedy, for example, could be employed to foster a sense of how the tragic characters came to grief through their overestimation of the value of externals, and by examining the plot, the audience could be encouraged to maintain its own critical stance when seeing how badly the tragic characters fared.[275]

The spectator is like a doctor diagnosing the psychological diseases of the characters, aiming to heal them. This critical detachment can be reinforced in different ways: by running a philosophical commentary on the action of the narrative, sometimes through attentive reading of the authorial voice in fiction; by generalising, applying the lessons of one fictional account to other similar contexts; and by humour and satire, criticising the human foibles of the characters with mocking irony.[276]

The Stoic spectator exercises the Stoic good emotions (*eupatheiai*), the rational wish (*boulêsis*) for the heroes' good, and friendly warning (*eulabeia*) concerning the ultimate results of their sickness.[277] Apuleius' text might also give us an incentive to approach the story of Socrates and Aristomenes in this way, as he uses humour to detach the reader from the worldview of his characters. The sudden shifts of emotion that are so characteristic of this narrative also emerge as crucial tools for effecting this detachment, as they draw our attention to those points in the story at which important social values were at stake. The emotions are not necessarily intended to draw us in, but to make us focus on the reactions of the characters, and on the "diseases" these reactions testify to. Furthermore, the intertextual connection to the story of Medea, which is implicit in Apuleius' narrative, encourages applying the lessons learned from studying Medea to the case of Meroe, which is indeed what we have done here. Similarly, we have attempted an attentive reading of the authorial voice in fiction in order to construct a running philosophical commentary on the action of the narrative.

Loci of Fear in and outside the City

8 Emotional Topography

Relatively little research concerning spatiality has been done in the field of the history of emotions, that is emotions linked to either specific places, or to particular types of places.[1] Two scholars who have started to address this query are Barbara Rosenwein and Benno Gammerl respectively,[2] and this strand of research can only be said to be in its infancy. Our study is influenced – and inspired – by the wide array of research done within a series of scholarly disciplines: history of emotions, folklore studies, human geography, city planning, philosophy, ancient history and classical archaeology.

8.1 The Concept of Emotional Topography

While it is clear that the different perspectives and standpoints these studies present are diverging, they share a basic theme: that certain locations elicited particular emotions. In our study, we employ a concept that we term "emotional topography",[3] a concept which emphasises the relation between space and emotions, taking the temporal aspect of these emotions into consideration. Often, but not always, there is a strong social component linked to the topographical and temporal aspects.

One important source of inspiration for this concept – which puts a strong emphasis on the temporal aspect – has been Jochum Stattin's thought-provoking folkloristic study of fear in nineteenth and twentieth-century Sweden (i.e., the traditional rural peasant society and the urban industrialised society respectively). Stattin's study includes an in-depth discussion of how different places in the rural landscape, and in the modern towns, were charged with different emotions. Stattin stresses that the emotions evoked were by no means static over time; places regarded as peaceful and pleasant during the day, could, at night, induce a strong sense of danger and a feeling of fear.[4]

We have also been strongly influenced by the research done in human geography. Within this field of research, scholars have shown a great deal of interest in women's reactions to, and strategies to cope with, the threat of violence and sexual assaults in cities. While numerous scholars have addressed this problem over the years, the works of Rachael Pain in particular have been important for our work. She and other scholars have placed emphasis on the fact that places unproblematic to pass during day-time, are perceived as potentially dangerous at night (in other words, there is a clear temporal

component within this strand of research). The fear that these threats produce have profound effects on women; most importantly, it has resulted in what has been termed "virtual curfew" – an involuntary spatial constraint – in the form of women abstaining from leaving their homes late at night.[5]

A wider perspective on the spatiality and temporality of emotions – also stressing the social component – is to be found in the concept of "emotional geography". This concept has also been developed within human geography, and "… attempts to understand emotion – experientially and conceptually – in terms of its socio-spatial meditation and articulation, rather than entirely interiorised subjective mental states".[6]

The reason for not employing the concept of "emotional geography" here is that it is very broad, and consequently somewhat vague.[7] Still, all those familiar with the latter strand of research will find many similarities between emotional topography and emotional geography.

In any discussion on space within the humanities and social sciences, social relationships are central.[8] As city planner Kevin Lynch long ago put it: "… people and their activities are as important as the stationary physical parts".[9] Different places have an impact on the people who frequent them; research has demonstrated that depending on how these places are defined, they have profound effects on people's emotions and how these emotions are expressed,[10] and in many cases have a manifest influence on people's more general behaviour.[11] For as forcefully argued by the philosopher Henri Lefebvre: "… space embodies social relationships".[12]

When it comes to the temporal aspects, we have been influenced by Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier's concept of "rhythmanalysis". According to them, any action performed by humans in a specific time and place will result in a rhythm, for instance the rhythmical flow of pedestrians walking or stopping depending on the traffic and the traffic lights in a city. Lefebvre and Régulier discriminate between repetitions – repetitions that influence the rhythm – of either cyclical or linear nature. By cyclical repetitions are meant shifts that are governed by nature: such as day and night or seasons of the year. Linear repetitions are in contrast shifts that have their origin in social practices. As pointed out by Lefebvre: "Cyclical repetition and the linear repetitive separate out under analysis, but in *reality* interfere with one another constantly".[13]

Having presented this brief background, let us return to the concept of "emotional topography". The temporal aspect is fundamental when it comes to what emotions a specific place evokes: these can in some cases shift several times a day; in many cases, there is a shift between day and night; there can be shifts which occur on a regular basis – every week, every month or

every year – and there are in some cases shifts that relate to the season of the year. To illustrate these shifts, we will give a number of examples from the modern world, but as we will see in Chapter 8.3, this concept is applicable to the ancient world as well.

Most important in this study are the shifts that relate to day and night. Let us give an example – not from ancient, but rather present-day – Rome. The authors' own experience of staying at the Swedish Institute in Rome[14] – situated on the outskirts of Villa Borghese: a large park – is a clear case of how the emotions a place elicits has a temporal component. Walking in Villa Borghese early in the morning, one is likely to meet dog-owners out on a peaceful stroll and occasional joggers passing by in the park. During daytime – if it is a weekday, nannies playing with young children – and during the weekends one finds families with their children there, as well as young couples. During most days, pensioners come to the park to enjoy a coffee in one of the cafés, set in the tranquil and shady surroundings. All in all, the park is a place which is perceived as positive, and one which generates emotions ranging from happiness to contentment. This is the case from about seven in the morning until seven in the evening. Then follows a sudden shift in what emotions are associated with the place, for after sunset many dread having to set foot in the park. The place evokes fear, for at night there is some degree of criminality, above all there is a risk of being robbed if one walks alone, and the park is a place where male prostitutes sell sex. This goes on until late at night, after which it again becomes a pleasant and popular place at sunrise. Following Lefebvre and Régulier, these shifts – or repetitions – can be regarded as cyclical in nature.[15]

There is a clear social dimension in these ever-revolving emotional shifts. Those who frequent the park after sunset are some of the most marginalised in society: prostitutes, many of which are drug addicts, and some of which are illegal immigrants. This stands in stark contrast to those visiting the park during daytime: dog-owners, joggers, families, young couples and so on. To some extent, this results in a "virtual curfew",[16] for men and women alike staying at the Swedish Institute are reluctant to walk through the park alone after dark. And even when walking together with others late at night, there is a certain degree of anxiety involved. As pointed out by Deborah Lupton, risks in modern society, and related fears, are often associated with "the Other": the socially marginalised and stigmatised.[17]

This example is by no means unique – in the authors' former hometown of Lund, Sweden – the town park is a place with two faces: pleasant during the day, frightening at night. Here there is the risk of being mugged,[18] or for

women the deeply unpleasant experience of risking encounters with flashers, results in many being hesitant to take the shortcut through the park at night.

In modern cities, there are a number of other places which evoke different emotions depending on what time it is; alleyways which during the day can seem picturesque and indeed pleasant, can be very scary after sunset. Similarly, squares bustling with life during the day are agreeable; when dark and deserted at night they are regarded by many as fearsome.[19] While research within human geography has clearly demonstrated the high degree to which this fear curtails women's lives,[20] one should not underestimate the degree of anxiety and fear men experience, above all the fear of violence.

Nigel Thrift has given a vivid description of the modern city as characterised by: "… roiling maelstroms of affect. Particular affects such as anger, fear, happiness and joy are continually on the boil, rising here, subsiding there …".[21] For there is another dimension of emotions in relation to space, which is of a situational nature. People's actions in specific places have emotional effects – for instance streets and roads in which traffic jams are likely to occur, are places of frustration and anger at the times when these occur; at other times they are likely to be viewed in a more neutral fashion.[22]

This is a typical example of how emotions related to a place can shift several times a day. Equally, in some places you are more likely to bump into friends and acquaintances, meetings hopefully of a joyful and pleasant nature. Naturally, this has some effect on how these places are perceived. Of course, the same street in which you are likely to meet these friends, could at night conjure a feeling of fear.

Our next example concerns how a place induces different emotions depending on which time of the year it is. Here we leave the city to look at the beach. In the summer, the beaches are bustling with people enjoying themselves, and they are associated with joy and happiness. The same beach in the autumn – although largely deserted – may result in other emotions: a sense of peace, perhaps also of melancholia. Again, it is an example of how emotions shift according to a cyclical pattern, but one which is of a seasonal kind.

There are of course places that can evoke certain emotions – such as unease, anxiety and fear – regardless of what time it is. This is not to say that the temporal aspect is irrelevant in these cases, for they are often far more frightening at night. But rather than the distinct shifts in emotions other places display, the emotions are in contrast the same, only more enhanced and accentuated after dark.

Typical examples are run-down areas of cities, areas inhabited by people who are socially and economically marginalized. In North America, this is the case with many inner cities, in Europe parts of suburbia.[23] As pointed out

by the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, elderly residents of the inner cities in the U.S. are so afraid that they are "virtually prisoners within their own homes".[24] But in contrast to the concept of "virtual curfew" – women being forced to live a spatially restricted life after dark – this anxiety and fear is present also during daytime.[25] Needless to say, these fears are not necessarily shared by all, but by groups which are either vulnerable,[26] or are outsiders.

Another aspect when it comes to the relation between space and emotions, is the "emotional repertoire" that is appropriate to express. As pointed out by Benno Gammerl: "… diverging emotional patterns and practices prevail in distinct spatial settings".[27] Expressions of grief and loss are both appropriate and come naturally to a person bereaved of a beloved one in for example a cemetery or church, whereas the same emotions are neither expressed nor expected on, say, a summer beach. There are also differences in the emotional repertoire depending on whether the spaces are private or public.[28]

8.2 Temporal Aspects of Fear: Night as a Time of Terror

> Dark nights curtail human vision. People lose their ability to manipulate the environment and feel vulnerable. As daylight withdraws, so does their world. Nefarious powers take over.[29]

That a deeply felt sense of vulnerability sets in after sunset, when darkness prevails, is underscored by Yi-Fu Tuan in his influential work *Landscapes of Fear*. It is a sense, as argued by Tuan, deeply ingrained in human nature. In many societies throughout the world, past or present, the night evokes both fear and anxiety. In this context, it is, however, important to differentiate between, on the one hand, "fear of the night" (*peur de l'obscurité*) and "fear in the night" (*peur dans l'obscurité*), as argued by the French historian Jean Delumeau.[30] In Roman society – with the exception of children for whom the black night itself was fearful – all that will be discussed below concerns fear in the night.[31]

For Roman authors, night might be a time of tranquillity,[32] a time when one could work in peace,[33] but more generally night was associated with a range of negative emotions in Roman culture:[34] most importantly, fear and vulnerability; moral indignation and anger directed at many of those who were out late at night;[35] and to some degree disgust.[36] Focus in this chapter will be placed on fear, whereas the discussion on the other emotions will be examined more in passing.

During the day, the streets of any Roman city would have been bustling with people, after sunset the streets soon emptied.[37] The homes of ordinary

people were shut and locked,[38] and equally most commercial establishments were closed, barred and dark[39] – the exception being bars and brothels[40] – leaving the cities dark and deserted. Fear in the night is, if not universal, at least widespread in traditional societies;[41] so too in Roman society darkness was associated with dangers. It was dangers in the form of drunkards, robbers and cut-throats, and, equally, ill-willing supernatural creatures.

The emotional topography of the Roman city and its surroundings appears to have been divided between places associated with "natural" and supernatural threats respectively. The supernatural was primarily associated with the marginal places within the city, and more prominently with areas beyond the boundaries of the city itself, such as cemeteries and crossroads; places which were regarded as liminal in nature. Haunted houses – houses in which people had met a violent death, and sometimes remained unburied – were an exception to this rule. There is nothing to suggest that houses regarded as haunted were common; quite to the contrary, the haunted houses in the stories analysed are mostly situated in cities far away (see Chapter 9.3). The "natural" threats in turn were largely associated with places within the city, but also with beyond the city (such as brigands robbing travellers).

The two categories, objective and phantasmatic fears respectively, had a profound effect on both people's mind-sets and behaviour. Many would have been reluctant to go out after dark, and most would probably have avoided leaving the city all together. Let us begin with the fears associated with the city itself. Ancient Rome had an impressive legal system, but largely lacked law enforcement.[42] To leave one's home after dark was to put oneself in peril – the risk of being robbed, the danger of being beaten by aggressive, often drunk, assailants, the threat of ending up dead, the victim of perpetrators – in the dark streets and alleys.[43] The written sources also speak of brawls between drunks in the dark streets.[44] The wealthy would therefore, not surprisingly, never walk alone late at night.[45]

Robbers out at night are a recurrent theme in Roman literature,[46] and they are often described as violent, as Horace (65–8 BC) writes: "Robbers rise at night to cut men's throats".[47] The intense feeling of vulnerability at night is echoed in Roman Law, for crime committed at night was the object of austere punishments.[48] This was the case in Rome's oldest written legal text, the *Law of the Twelve Tables* (451/450 BC).[49]

Being out after dark was not only associated with danger, but equally with disgust, and these emotions are in many cases related to each other.[50] Both literary and legal texts bear witness to excrement, or even dead animals, being flung out into the streets.[51] It was for instance prohibited to empty chamber pots or to throw out objects onto the streets below as they might

injure passers-by,[52] an all too common problem judging by Juvenal's (fl. AD 110–130/later) vivid description, reflecting the fact that the high-rise houses lacked latrines:[53]

> Indeed, there are as many fates [awaiting you] as there are open windows watching as you pass by at night. Therefore, make a wish and a miserable prayer that they will be content with pouring out their chamber pots.[54]

The passage in Juvenal bears witness to the fact that objects, such as broken pots, were being discarded by simply throwing them out the window late at night.[55] Larger vessels like the heavy amphorae would have been a lethal threat to any unfortunate individual happening to wander by;[56] moreover, the sharp shards cut peoples' feet as they walked along the dark and empty streets.[57]

There is ample evidence – epigraphic as well as literary – bearing witness to people's habit of urinating and defecating in the alleyways behind houses,[58] on the streets,[59] behind water distribution towers,[60] in the parks,[61] even on statues of deities,[62] and, as we shall discuss in greater detail below, also among the tombs along the roads leading into the towns.[63] Some of the passages in the literature specify that this took place at night, under the cover of darkness, whereas most sources do not specify the time. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that it was often during night-time that this happened.[64]

During daytime, the roads leading to the cities – and also the crossroads along these routes – would have been teeming with travellers either on foot,[65] riding on mules, donkeys or more rarely on horses,[66] or as the wealthy in carriages and wagons.[67] Here one would encounter mules and donkeys laden with goods,[68] and numerous wagons pulled by mules or oxen[69] transporting for instance food,[70] fodder,[71] and merchandise into the cities, manufactured goods,[72] and also manure and garbage out of the cities.[73] A view of how travelling along the roads – and other routes, such as canals – was regarded is described in Horace's *Satire* 1.5. At least from an elite perspective it appears to have been both tiring and tedious.[74] Travelling the roads during day-time was thus, if not particularly pleasant, by no means associated with anxiety or fear.

If being out after sunset in the city itself was associated with a distinct sense of anxiety or fear, it was by far more accentuated when it came to the city's surroundings and areas beyond that, not least because of the threat brigands posed. For this reason, travelling the roads at night was deemed very dangerous – even lethal – as is evident from a passage in Apuleius' (b. *c.* AD 125) *Metamorphoses*. When Aristomenes attempts to flee from the inn (see Chapter 7.1), he is hindered by the porter who claims that anyone who wants to leave before sunrise is "eager to die".[75] This threat was not merely to be found in the novels' adventures,[76] and elegiac poetry,[77] banditry clearly constituted a

real – and apparently widespread – problem[78] as attested by law codes[79] and literary sources;[80] indeed, it is even echoed in contemporary schoolbooks.[81] Further evidence is found in the epigraphical record: there are a number of finds of grave inscriptions commemorating those who had fallen victims to this kind of violence.[82]

Brigands were profoundly associated with death, for not only could travellers be brutally murdered, the brigands themselves often met a similar fate. For the legal system allowed for – even encouraged – travellers to either arrest or kill brigands.[83] The medical writer Galen (AD 129–199/216) mentions this in passing in a treatise on anatomy:

> Once we saw the skeleton of a bandit lying on a hill a bit to the side of the road. He had been killed by some traveller, who had been attacked on this very same spot, as the bandit advanced on him. None of the inhabitants of that place intended to bury him, but out of hatred rejoiced that his body was being eaten by the birds. In a few days, these had eaten his flesh and left the skeleton [clean], as if for the purpose of medical inspection.[84]

The corpses of killed brigands were, as witnessed by Galen, left unburied along the roads, for the denial of burial was a fundamental part of people's revenge: a severe punishment as it meant not coming to peace, but being doomed to wander the face of the earth as restless ghosts. The same fate awaited some of those who were brought before justice, for they not only suffered the most severe of death penalties – *summa supplicia* – being thrown to the beasts in the arena, being burnt alive, or, most commonly, were crucified, but were left unburied.[85] The purpose of crucifixion was not only to punish the perpetrator, equally and perhaps more importantly, its purpose was to deter others:[86]

> Most approve of hanging notorious brigands on the gallows in those places where they have made their attacks. This is so that others, seeing this, may be deterred from the same crimes – as well as to bring solace to the relatives and kin of those who were killed where the brigands committed their murders – when punishment has been meted out.[87]

Crucifixions were carried out outside of the cities' bounds, on the one hand emphasising that the criminal was excluded from civic society,[88] and on the other hand deliberately placing the pollution of death outside the city itself. Places of execution were situated along the main roads and crossroads,[89] along with the burial grounds, as in the story of *The Widow of Ephesus* in Petronius' (d. AD 66) *Satyrica*. This story emphasises that the corpse of those crucified were not only left on the crosses to rot,[90] they were even guarded by soldiers in order to prevent the relatives from taking the body to burial.[91] Other sources speak of the bodies of the crucified being mutilated by birds,[92] or if they were

taken down on the ground, by other animals, and even by witches for use in magic.[93]

Living brigands posed, as we have seen, a lethal threat to all travellers, evoking anxiety and fear; dead brigands were probably no less frightening: having died a violent death and being denied burial, they would return as restless and disturbingly dangerous ghosts. It is clear that there were those who made use of the deeply felt fears that these supernatural creatures could create. Several sources speak of brigands dressed as ghosts, roaming the roads in search of victims to rob.[94] In Lollianus' novel *Phoinikika*, these brigands were dressed in white or black robes, wearing coloured bands around their heads, and their faces painted in white or black.[95]

It is clear that brigands exploited popular superstition as a means of protection by putting their victims in a state of terror. This is evident from a passage in Apuleius, when the ass Lucius and a girl held captive by brigands – Charite – made an attempt to escape. Soon they were caught by the brigands who greeted them with the sinister words:

> "Where are you going with such hurried steps along this road at night, do you not dread the shades and ghosts of the dead?[96]

Not only brigands were denied burial, however, the corpses of those who had committed suicide for a reason not approved of were unceremoniously dumped at crossroads.[97] The victims of self-inflicted death were thought not to come to rest, but to end up as restless ghosts.[98]

Night was generally thought to be a time when the nefarious powers came into force, a time of terror and fear; we hear of the hauntings of not only ghosts but also witches. Home was generally regarded as a safe haven, and staying indoors was often equated with being safe. Yet there are stories of *striges* – ill-willing, vampire-like witches violating the boundaries of homes: "They fly at night and attack children destitute of their nurse, and corrupt their bodies, which are snatched from their cradles".[99] These babies were the most defenceless of all, and needed nursing at all hours (see Chapter 5.1).

The threshold – being the boundary between indoors and outdoors, and as such regarded as a liminal place – was associated with the spirits of the dead, other types of evil spirits and witches.[100] It was particularly important to protect not only the threshold, but equally the doorposts, door and windows, for it was through these that malicious creatures could enter. A number of passages in ancient literature make clear that people made precautions to safeguard their homes from these supernatural threats, and this protection was accomplished by different magical means,[101] for instance placing prophylactic substances under the threshold.[102]

Or, in the case of specifically keeping out *striges*, touching the doorposts thrice with arbutus leaves, sprinkling them with water mixed with medical herbs and sacrificing a piglet.[103] Windows were in turn protected against *striges* with whitethorn.[104] These nocturnal terrors caused fear and nightmares, and Pliny the Elder (AD 23/24–79) writes that iron nails used for coffins and dug up at cemeteries could be driven down in the ground just in front of the threshold to protect the houses' inhabitants from suffering from nightmares.[105]

Witches of another type – *sagae* – were in many respects regarded as embodying a reversal of the norms of society;[106] moreover, witches were associated with nature and *not* with civilization.[107] With few exceptions, people performed their tasks during the day, witches instead did their evil and often illicit deeds at the dead of night.[108] Women were connected with life: childbearing and childrearing,[109] witches in contrast were associated with death and the deceased.[110] The latter were thought to be the cause of gruesome death, like the murder discussed in Chapter 7.1. The literary witches employed the remains of the dead in different types of malicious magic,[111] and they were thought to have the ability to force the spirits of the dead to perform various malevolent tasks.[112] Moreover, witches were associated with the chthonic goddess Hecate and the Underworld.[113]

Even the witches' manner of dress brings death to mind, for, at least in part, it echoes that of a woman in mourning. The witch Canidia in Horace's *Satire* 1.8 is depicted in the following manner: "… with black robe tucked up, bare feet and dishevelled hair…".[114] The descriptions of the witches' deeds may be dramatic in the poetic works, but when it comes to the manner in which they dressed and their appearance – wearing black,[115] ungirt[116] garments, clothes often torn and tattered, having bare feet,[117] the hair loose and dishevelled,[118] sometimes displaying a filthy appearance – this in part corresponds to what we know of magical practices in the real world.[119]

This in turn resembled the way in which a woman in mourning would appear and dress – that is, with loose, unkempt and unwashed hair, wearing dark garments, neglecting her appearance – and according to the grammarian Servius (*c.* AD 400) in his *Commentary on Virgil's Aeneid*, mourners inverted the manner in which one would normally dress.[120] The witches' close association with death would of course be a cause of anxiety and fear; however, they were mainly associated with liminal places such as crossroads and cemeteries at night.

To sum up the above: the rhythm of city life – to use the words of Lefebvre and Régulier – was of a cyclical nature: during the day, the cities would have been bustling with life, but by contrast, at night the cities were dark and largely deserted. Correspondingly, the emotional shifts were cyclical. The

ancient Roman city, like its modern counterpart, contained a wide array of different emotions during the day: joy and happiness – and their counterpart sadness and sorrow, irritation and outright anger, fear and envy, to mention some of the most important. At night, we see a narrower scope of emotions, with anxiety and fear as dominant, that is, if you were outdoors. Being indoors behind barred gates or locked doors at night was a completely different matter, and this was in many cases associated with tranquillity, silence and safety. There was a clear social dimension to this matter of fact. The authors who associated the night with tranquillity and silence generally belonged to the upper strata of society, whereas the poor were often disturbed at night by heavy traffic and noise.

Juvenal gives a vivid description of the fear of assault – both of a verbal and physical nature – one risked if going out alone after dark.[121] The anxiety and fear that people felt as a result of these threats contributed to what we think is appropriately termed "a virtual curfew". People could even be stopped from going out, as in the example mentioned above: the porter who stopped Aristomenes from leaving an inn before sunrise in Apuleius' novel *Metamorphoses*.[122] We hear of few men, and even fewer women, being out at night. Moreover, for men and women alike, to be outdoors after dark was regarded as a sign of immorality.

Although it is evident that many in the cities were reluctant to go outdoors after dark, it is clear that if one did so anyway, some places caused a greater degree of anxiety and fear than others, and these appear to have been associated with the supernatural in many cases. In the following chapter, we will look closer at the emotional topography of the Roman city and its surroundings, focusing on the places associated with fear in the narratives we have analysed: roads and crossroads, cemeteries and inns (an exception to the places being outdoors).

8.3 Charged Places: Cemeteries, Roads, Crossroads and Inns

A closer study of the emotional topography of the Roman city and its surroundings reveals that three categories of places, as witnessed by numerous narratives, appear to have been particularly associated with anxiety and fear after sunset: cemeteries, roads and crossroads and inns. There was a clear temporal component in the emotions these places evoked, for during the day these places were predominantly, but not solely, linked to positive emotions. There was a distinct social element to the emotions, for at night several of

these places were associated with the marginalised in society, which partly explains the dread and fear felt by others in society. These cyclical emotional shifts between day and night – between positive and negative emotions – bear a resemblance to those found in modern cities (see above, Chapter 8.1).

These places had several features in common: their marginal topographic setting, in the outskirts of the cities or just outside the cities' formal and religious boundary.[123] Related to this, they appear to have been regarded as liminal places, and they were public in the sense that they were accessible to all. After dark, they were to a greater or lesser degree associated with the socially and economically disadvantaged and marginalised in Roman society: prostitutes, thieves, brigands, and, in the case of the cemeteries, homeless.

Moreover, they were regarded as unclean – ritually impure, as in the case of crossroads and places of execution along the roads – or materially unclean with filth and bugs, as in the inns, or excrement, as in the cemeteries. Finally, it is worthy of note that these three categories of places were closely associated with magic, with witches as well as other types of magic of an illicit character. Let us therefore discuss these places in a greater degree of detail, beginning with the cemeteries.

The cemetery evoked a range of different emotions. During the day, it was regarded as a tranquil place, on the one hand associated with loss and grief, on the other hand a positive place in which the family on specific occasions gathered to honour those who had passed away.[124] This stood in stark contrast to the emotions that the same place evoked after sunset: outright fear, dread and disgust.

Roman law regulated that all burials should be placed outside the cities' religious boundary, and typically the cemeteries were situated along the roads leading in and out of the cities.[125] The roads outside of the towns were interspersed with cemeteries, gardens, villas and inns.[126] During the day, these roads would have been teeming with life (see Chapter 8.2),[127] the inscriptions on the tombs were often directed at these travellers passing by, addressing them directly. Not surprisingly, many of them dwell upon the grief and loss felt for a beloved person, but it was by no means uncommon that they were positive or even jocular in tone.[128] Often they ask the reader to contemplate those who had passed away.[129]

Although the cemeteries constituted dwellings for the dead, they were in many respects designed to cater to the living,[130] and were by no means demarcated from the world of the living. Some tombs were provided with seats for weary travellers. Festivities and sacrifices in the honour of the deceased took place here, and in some cases the tombs even had banquet rooms (*triclinia*). Some tombs were also pleasantly placed in lush gardens.[131]

In many respects, cemeteries must have been regarded as liminal places. As mentioned above, they were placed outside the cities from a practical, formal and religious perspective, yet they can be said to have constituted an integral part of the cities. The fact that these were liminal places contributed to the unease, anxiety and fear that these places evoked after sunset; another contributing factor was that they were thought to be haunted by supernatural creatures like witches at night, and the fact that they were frequented by prostitutes, thieves, brigands and even inhabited by homeless people.

While the dead in some cases had been wealthy in life, leaving the resources to erect impressive tombs resembling small houses, the living who inhabited abandoned tombs belonged to the poorest of the poor: the totally destitute.[132] Among the tombs, completely impoverished prostitutes (*bustuariae moechae*) plied their trade.[133] In the literary sources, these are treated with contempt and disgust. Catullus (*c.* 84–*c.* 54 BC) gives a vivid picture of one of these, Rufa from Bononiensis (present-day Bologna), who is so poor that she has to resort to stealing bread from the funerary pyres.[134] Another term for those prostitutes who sold sex among the graves in the cemetery was *lupa* "she-wolf", stressing that they were perceived as predators.[135]

The prostitutes selling sex, possibly also living among abandoned graves, were viewed as particularly unclean – probably as a result of their extreme poverty, in a ritual sense as a result of selling sex in an area contaminated by death, and possibly also related to the kind of sexual acts they performed.[136] These prostitutes were prohibited from bathing at regular hours, and could only enter the baths when the bath-keeper (Latin *balneator*) had put out the lights at night.[137]

It was not only the homeless and prostitutes who made use of abandoned tombs, thieves stashed loot in them, relying on the fact that people's superstition and fear would deter them from coming there.[138] These must have been very convenient as they were in the immediate vicinity of the cities, just by the roads, yet often hidden away. Although not specifically stated in the sources, it is quite possible that brigands, too, dressing up as ghosts and robbing travellers along the roads (see Chapter 8.2), would have hidden the stolen goods in abandoned tombs.

The supernatural played a significant role – the supernatural in the form of witches, whereas not to any great extent ghosts – in making the cemeteries frightening and fearful. If the deceased had received the right funerary rites and been placed in a tomb, this meant that the spirit came to rest and could enter the Underworld;[139] it was those who were denied this that were thought to become ghosts (for an in-depth discussion see Chapter 9.1). The ghosts that do occur in different narratives relating to cemeteries, are the spirits of the

dead which were forced to rise from their places of rest by malevolent magical acts performed by witches.[140]

Poets, as for example Tibullus (55/48–19 BC) and Horace, provide us with vivid – even if in some cases grossly inflated – pictures of the illicit magic performed at the cemeteries. Examples of this are the hideous act of human sacrifice performed by witches in Horace's *Epodes* 5,[141] or the gruesome deeds of the witches described in Horace's *Satires* 1.8.[142] Witches would gather herbs or bones in the cemetery,[143] or, as in the description of Horace, a former paupers' burial ground turned into a park – the Gardens of Maecenas[144] – to use in love magic:

> I have seen with my own eyes Canidia walking with black robe tucked up, with bare feet and dishevelled hair, shrieking with the elder Sagana. Their pallor made both terrible in appearance. They started scratching the earth with their nails, and to tear apart a black lamb with their teeth; blood was poured into a trench in order to evoke the shades, souls that would give them answers. There was one figure of wool, the other of wax: the woollen one was larger, it subdued the inferior one with punishments; the waxen one stood like a suppliant, as if it was about to be killed in a slavish manner. One [witch] calls on Hecate, the other on savage Tisiphone: you might see serpents and infernal hounds wandering around, and the blushing Moon – so as not to witness this – hiding behind the great tombs.[145]

The most dramatic witch of all – Lucan's (AD 39–65) Erichto – shuns life in the city, to dwell among the dead in a tomb. She performs horrendous acts of necromancy, forcing the souls of the dead to return from the Underworld to speak.[146] The picture the poets present is extremely exaggerated, yet it is clear from other sources of evidence, non-literary texts such as the so-called magical papyri and leaden curse tablets, that magic was performed at the cemeteries.[147] The tombs of those who had met a violent death, or had died young, could be exploited for magical means by placing curse tablets there.[148] In many cases, these curses dealt with love magic, or for instance with the right team winning the chariot races at the circus.[149] These magical acts were in other words linked to other emotions, in these specific cases love, and the urge to win and the strong feeling of frustration when this did not happen.

It is clear that cemeteries evoked emotions such as a sense of dread and fear, but also of disgust. For travellers travelling along the roads had few other options to deal with Nature's call than to relieve themselves behind the tombs.[150] In other words, the cemeteries were also associated with excrement and filth. It appears probable that this caused a feeling of not only disgust; judging by inscriptions by those who were responsible for tending the graves, it also aroused anger. Tombs could in some cases be furnished with inscriptions

carrying warnings against defiling or violating it, written in an aggressive and menacing manner:[151]

> Stranger, these bones ask you not to pee on the grave
> If you want to be welcome, poo!
> You see the monument of Urtica [Nettle]: go away, pooer!
> It's not safe for you to relieve yourself here.[152]

Turning from the cemeteries to roads and, more importantly, crossroads, these related categories of places also conjured emotions such as a sense of vulnerability, anxiety and, in some cases, utter fear, especially for those forced to continue their travel after sunset. While there is little to suggest that roads in general were regarded as liminal,[153] crossroads clearly belonged to that category.[154] The English word "crossroad" can be somewhat misleading; in this context, the Latin *trivium* is meant, i.e. a place where a traveller comes to a fork in the road – a Y junction – in other words, a place where three roads meet.[155] In contrast, a crossing of two roads, from which a traveller might go in one of four directions, is properly termed *quadrivium*.

Crossroads were closely associated with different aspects of death, but, unlike the cemetery, primarily with death of a violent variety: suicides and execution. Bodies of people having ended their own lives could be dumped at crossroads, and gallows were set up along roads and crossroads, where the crucified would act as a warning against acts of banditry and other serious crimes. These were thought to carry the pollution of death, and, even during the day, people would have hastened past the gallows, filled with fear.[156]

As we have seen in the preceding chapter (Chapter 8.2), those who had committed suicide or had faced death on the cross not only died a violent death, more importantly, they were even denied burial. This would have prevented their spirits from entering the Underworld, and thus from coming to rest; rather, they were left as restless ghosts thought to able to cause destruction and death. Witches may well have to come to the crossroads – much in the same way as they came to cemeteries – to do evil deeds, forcing these restless ghosts by magical means to perform hideous and heinous acts, or gathering human remains to use for magical purposes.[157]

Small shrines were erected to the chthonic goddess Hecate, to Diana *Trivia*, guardian of the crossroads, or to *triformis dea* "the three-form goddess" – Diana, Luna and Hecate – beside the crossroads.[158] People would turn to Hecate or Diana *Trivia* for help in times of danger and the threat of death, in other words, there were both positive and negative aspects of these goddesses. Nevertheless, people would shun these places, not least since ritually polluted refuse would be placed there, as well as corpses of those who committed

suicide.[159] This is illustrated by a passage in Petronius' *Satyrica*: "… what filth or corpse did you tread on at the crossroads at night?"[160] On the whole, at night crossroads evoked a range of unpleasant emotions: a sense of dread and unease, of anxiety and fear, and finally also disgust.

Along the roads one would find the next category of places associated with anxiety, fear and often also a degree of disgust: inns. The written sources show that many, particularly among the elite in Roman society, had negative sentiments towards taverns and inns, and these pertained to the places as such, in the case of taverns in towns, to the people who frequented them, and not least the staff that ran taverns and inns. Despite a number of similarities in these sentiments, marked differences in how the tavern (*caupona*, *taberna*) and the inn (*hospitium*, *deversorium*, *stabulum*) were perceived are also apparent in the sources.[161]

The taverns in town were thought of as seedy, filthy places of ill-repute and violence, and as such they evoked an array of different emotions: contempt, disgust, and anxiety. The inns – often situated on the margins of towns,[162] just outside of towns,[163] or in the countryside[164] – were in contrast regarded with a sense of vulnerability, of anxiety and outright fear, and to some degree also looked upon with disgust and loathing. This anxiety and fear emanated from threats from both the "natural world" and the supernatural world, threats experienced primarily at night. There were stories about people being murdered by sinister innkeepers, robbing them of their possessions (see Chapter 9.2), of innkeepers serving human flesh from murdered guests,[165] and of female innkeepers who turned out to be witches (see Chapter 7.1), and of werewolves (see below).

In contrast, the unease and anxiety that the taverns in the towns evoked were all linked to "the real world". In the mind of the Roman elite, the bars in towns were associated with vices of all sorts: gambling,[166] prostitution[167] and brawls,[168] and, more importantly, they were thought to be frequented by the dregs of society.[169] A number of ancient authors also voice their disgust, writing that the bars were untidy,[170] sometimes steamy or reeking of greasy smoke.[171] Cicero's (106–43 BC) accusations against members of the elite standing before court, "having been seen in taverns" makes these pejorative opinions manifest.[172]

Whereas no respectable member of the elite would ever set foot in a tavern in town,[173] the inns catered to travellers of all kinds, including the relatively well-off. This is illustrated by Horace's well-known account of his journey from Rome to Brundisium, where he writes: "Leaving stately Rome, Aricia welcomed me at a modest inn, with Heliodorus the rhetorician – by far the most learned of the Greeks – as my companion".[174] As pointed out by

several scholars, travellers – at least those who could not stay with friends who lived locally (see Chapter 9.2) – had little choice but to stay at an inn.[175]

Many who travelled the roads were merchants, carrying with them both goods of value and money. As innkeepers were often regarded as dishonest, sometimes even suspected of being in league with local thieves, this created a sense of vulnerability, anxiety and even fear among travellers. The vulnerability is reflected in the Roman legal system, offering travellers on both sea and land special legal protection. Innkeepers were responsible for protecting peoples' possessions, and they were not only responsible for their own acts, but also for the acts of their staff.[176]

Adding to the sense of anxiety and fear was the fact that the inn was regarded as a liminal place: a place at the same time private and public. They were privately run,[177] but, like other public places, they were open to all – or rather to all paying customers. They catered to travellers' needs, providing food, beverages and beds, yet they were by no means like a home. Their setting was also liminal, for, as mentioned above, they were often situated on the outskirts of towns or outside of them. The anxiety and fear – and also the anger and loathing sometimes expressed in the sources – appear to be related to the staff rather than to fellow guests.

Inns were often run by women,[178] old women, sometimes widows,[179] more often former prostitutes (who most probably had once been barmaids).[180] Prostitution was equally part of the inns' environment, whether they were situated in the countryside or just outside a town;[181] for instance, the female innkeeper in the Pseudo-Virgilian work *Copa* offered *Ceres*, *Amor* and *Bromius* – in other words "bread", "love" and "wine".[182]

We also hear of many male innkeepers in the literary sources,[183] and the attitudes towards these often reveal feelings of either anger or in some cases fear. Male innkeepers were frequently regarded as a rude and generally unfriendly lot,[184] as echoed in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, where Socrates fervently exclaims: "It is not unjustly that guests detest all these innkeepers".[185] They are also depicted as dishonest,[186] as mentioned above; this was also made manifest in Roman legislation, and they were therefore held in disregard. A story illustrating the negative sentiments against innkeepers is the Aesopic tale "The Thief and the Innkeeper":

> A thief was lodging at a certain inn and stayed there for some days in expectation of stealing something. Since he proved unable to do this, the thief went up and seated himself next to the innkeeper, seeing him one day sitting before the gates of the inn dressed in a beautiful and new cloak (for it was a festival). No one else happened to be around, and the thief began talking to him.

> Having talked for a good while, the thief yawned while howling like a wolf. The innkeeper said to him: "Why do you do this?", and the thief answered: "I will tell you now, but I beg you to guard my clothes, for I will leave them here. Sir, I do not know why I am punished with yawning like this; whether it is because of my errors or for some other reason, I do not know. Whenever I yawn three times, I become a wolf and eat human beings".
>
> Saying this, he yawned a second time and howled again. On hearing this, the innkeeper believed it [to be true], got frightened of the thief, and rose up planning his escape. The thief seized him by the cloak and exhorted him, saying: "Wait, sir, take my clothes so that I will not be deprived of them". And while exhorting him, he opened his mouth and started yawning a third time. The innkeeper, fearing that he would eat him, abandoned his cloak and ran at full speed to the inn, locking himself safely inside. And the thief took the cloak and walked away.[187]

Innkeepers were thought of as unreliable and cheating, but here it is the innkeeper himself who is tricked, something which must have been regarded as inherently funny. It also illustrates how inns – and more importantly innkeepers – could be associated with the supernatural: witches, ghosts, and, as in this case, a werewolf.[188]

Moreover, a number of accusations of innkeepers being murderous are found in the sources. In the medical works of Galen, we find claims of innkeepers serving human flesh, and one can assume that this flesh emanated from unsuspecting guests killed in their sleep.[189] Although the emotional reactions to these – in all probability false – accusations are not stated in the text, we think it can be assumed that travellers' tales of this kind would evoke a series of emotions: dismay or disgust,[190] anxiety and fear, perhaps also fascination.

There are also stories of guests being murdered in their beds by innkeepers wanting to steal their money. Cicero writes about two travellers who decide to share a room at an inn, one of which carried with him a fair sum of money, which the innkeeper decides to rob him of. The innkeeper: "… entered at night when he perceived that they were sleeping soundly from weariness, and drew the sword of the penniless man out of its scabbard; it was lying by his side. He killed the other man, stealing his money, put away the bloodied sword in its scabbard and went back to his own bed".[191] In this story, the crucial question concerns who would be convicted of the crime, in other stories the important issue concerns the importance of receiving burial rites and a grave proper. Those who died violent deaths and were denied burial were thought to return as restless spirits, i.e., as ghosts of a malevolent kind. In these stories, the innkeeper tries to conceal his hideous crime by trying to

hide away the corpse, but is hindered as the murdered man appears as a ghost in a friend's dreams (see Chapter 9.2).

Were female innkeepers sometimes suspected of being witches? This is quite possible, as witches – at least in the literary accounts – are principally described as old women. Women who had once been prostitutes were also associated with witchery, not least with love magic.[192] Apuleius' portrayal of Meroe in his novel *Metamorphoses* – an innkeeper, and equally a malevolent and violent witch (see Chapter 7.1) – lives in Thessaly in Greece:[193] an area thought to be ridden with witches.[194] This view appears to have been widespread, although claimed as false by St Augustine (AD 354–430):

> When we were in Italy, we heard such things of a region in those parts. There, female innkeepers – who were imbued in these evil arts – were said to serve whatever they wanted or could [of magical substances hidden] in cheese to travellers. These were instantly transformed into beasts of burden and carried whatever was necessary; having performed their work, they returned to their own selves again.[195]

Turning from the emotions of anxiety and fear to dismay and disgust, these emotions were also evoked in connection with inns. Many travellers would have taken the possibility to take a bath to wash off the dirt and filth before going to their inn, as did for example Aristomenes and Socrates in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.[196] But the innkeepers could clearly not choose their guests – clean or not, all were let in; epigraphical evidence suggests that some simply did not bother to bathe:

> If you are in good condition,
> here is a house ready for you.
> If you are dirty, I will still grant you lodging,
> even though it makes me feel ashamed.[197]

Inns were not only thought to be filthy places to sleep; the beds were furthermore believed to be ridden with bed-bugs and fleas,[198] and it was thought spiders and lizards would fall on guests from the ceilings.[199] They could also be otherwise unclean; one *grafitto* written by a guest the innkeeper had forgotten to provide with a chamber pot, simply peed in the bedding: "I peed in the bed. Innkeeper, I confess I have transgressed. If you ask me why, there was no chamber pot".[200]

At the core of places that were emotionally charged – in this case places coupled with a sense of vulnerability, unease, anxiety and fear after sunset – were those one dreaded to encounter: innkeepers, prostitutes, thieves and brigands. In particular prostitutes and brigands represented the very opposite of ideal women or men: as people who often plied their "trade" at night, they

were by definition dishonest.[201] In the case of brigands,[202] they were very dangerous, and, in that of prostitutes, considered to be unclean and polluted; the prostitutes' appearance and dress were the opposite of that of a matron;[203] prostitutes and brigands alike were described as heavy drinkers;[204] and so on. As we have seen, these liminal places were also associated with the supernatural: witches, ghosts and, in one case, a werewolf.

8.4 Dodgy Places: Harbours as Sticky Objects

There can be little doubt that temporal aspects were of fundamental importance to our understanding of the emotional topography of cities and their surroundings. As we have seen, places that were positively perceived during the day could at night evoke emotions such as anxiety and outright fear (see Chapter 8.1–8.3). But there were also places which were viewed with a degree of distrust and even dread regardless of whether it was day or night. While this chapter focuses on harbours and harbour cities, it has to be stressed that inns have a great deal in common with harbours in this respect.

Inns and harbours alike were public places, the former in the sense that they were open to the public despite being privately owned, the latter from both a practical and legal perspective.[205] They were deemed dodgy places, places teeming with people of dubious morals. In the inns you would encounter strangers – in particular the staff, but possibly also other guests – whom you could not and should not trust (see Chapter 9.2). The risk of encountering supernatural beings such as witches or demons in inns and at harbours was a recurrent theme in the oral traditions of the time (see Chapter 7.1, 7.2 & 9.1).

Both inns and harbours were perceived as places where licentiousness thrived; they were associated with immorality more generally and prostitution in particular. They were also seen as places where outlandish and outrageous things could and sometimes did occur (see Chapter 7.2 & 10.1). We propose that Sarah Ahmed's concepts of "stickiness" and "sticky objects"[206] can not only be applied to people but equally to places. It was not the places themselves that provoked those emotions, however, but rather the fact that they were populated by people who were either themselves sticky objects – innkeepers,[207] prostitutes[208] and foreigners[209] – or of a more general low social standing, such as sailors,[210] muleteers[211] and sack-carriers.[212]

Stickiness meant that uttering only a single word – or a mere name – could conjure a whole set of stereotypical and negative verbal associations.[213] Take "Corinth" for example, a name which immediately brought to mind a cascade of associations of this kind. The perception of this city and its several

ports was coloured by the Greek past as well as the Roman present. Corinth was a city associated with its overseas trade, immense wealth and excessive luxury, its strong foreign influences which made it infamous, its moral corruption of which the city's notorious prostitution is most notable.[214] These sentiments are perhaps best articulated in Cicero's *On the Republic*:

> There is also a certain corruption and alteration of morals in maritime cities. For they are contaminated by new languages and teachings, and do not only import foreign goods but customs, too, so that nothing can remain untouched of their ancestral institutions. Even those who live in these cities do not stick to their place of residence but are always dragged off far from home by high-flown hopes and plans, and even when they stay in body, they live in spirit in exile and wander around.[215]

Cicero goes on to argue that the downfall of two of Rome's arch enemies – Carthage and Corinth – was ultimately caused by their geographical setting. The sea is in its essence corrupting; morals degenerate in cities like this, for trade and luxury weakens the will to do "real work", leading to the abandonment of agriculture as well as the pursuit of arms.

Yet another element that might have evoked the emotions that harbours did – moral indignation and a degree of uneasiness – must have been their liminality. This is, in other words, a feature that harbours have in common with places that evoked fear in the emotional topography of the city and its surroundings. Harbours were liminal places in the sense that they were situated on the border between land and sea, that is, between civilization and nature; they were an integrated part of their respective societies, yet they were heavily influenced by "alien" cultures and to no little extent populated by "foreigners".

In short, it is no coincidence that a number of the stories we study in the present book take place in harbour cities such as Corinth, Carteia, Megara, Ostia and Puteoli, for without a doubt they were all to a greater or lesser degree *sticky*.

9 The Fear of Being Left Unburied

Ghosts

This chapter revolves around two related themes – death, in particular death of a violent kind, namely murder – and the fundamental importance of receiving proper funerary rites. In fact, it is clear that being denied proper burial rites, for whatever reason, was regarded as by far more fearful than death itself.[1] Those who had met this fate were believed not to be let into the Underworld, but to remain as restless ghosts wandering the face of the earth.

> The crowd you see is wretched and unburied; the ferryman is Charon. Those whom the wave carries are the buried. He may not carry [the unburied] across these dreadful banks and roaring flood before the bones have found peace in a burial place. They wander around and flit about these shores for a hundred years; only then will they be admitted and revisit these longed-for pools.[2]

If death – whatever its cause – occurred in one's home or home town, most people could rely on the fact that either relatives, friends or in some cases the fellow members of a *collegium* (i.e. a club or association, sometimes a specific funeral club), would ensure that one was given a grave and provided with the proper funerary rites.[3]

Travelling was associated with a number of dangers, for instance, as discussed in Chapter 8.2, the risk of being robbed by brigands, violent acts which sometimes ended in murder and with being left without burial. Despite the fact that inns would lock and guard their gates after sunset, and that the guests in turn would bar the doors to their rooms, this did not make them safe havens in the minds of most Romans. Quite to the contrary, for as we have seen in Chapter 8.3, staying the night at an inn caused a deep sense of vulnerability and consequently also anxiety.

Inns played a prominent part in the emotional topography of the Roman city and its surroundings, as inns evoked strong emotions of disgust, dread, and fear. Inns – and more importantly innkeepers – form the focus for the following two subchapters (9.1 & 9.2). Numerous references in Roman literature seem to suggest that in the mind of many Romans, innkeepers were often regarded as unfriendly and untrustworthy. Moreover, the narratives discussed in this chapter depict them as murderous.

Perhaps the way a private home was perceived in the emotional topography of the Roman city may have added to the fascination felt about

stories of haunted houses, for a friend's or relative's home normally provided a pleasant and safe place for travellers. The stories discussed in detail in Chapter 9.3 below – stories about haunted houses – suggest that dreadful things such as murder and death could occur in these contexts too. Most houses must have been seen as safe, however, for there is nothing in the sources to suggest that haunted houses were felt to form a typical feature of an ancient city. Quite to the contrary, the haunted houses of these narratives were to be found in distant places such as Athens and Corinth.

In Chapter 7.1, we presented the evidence demonstrating the oral origin of Aristomenes' Story – i.e., a story of witches, and as we argue also about a man becoming a ghost – in Apuleius' (b. *c.* AD 125) *Metamorphoses* book 1. This story is discussed in some detail in the following section. The ghost-story about a man murdered in Megara (Chapter 9.2) – a victim of an innkeeper's greed for gold – is found in three similar, but by no means, identical versions in works of Cicero (106–43 BC), Valerius Maximus (fl. *c.* AD 27–31) and Aelian (AD 165/170–230/235).[4] Although the latter traces the story to the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus of Soli (*c.* 280–207 BC), there is in fact much to suggest that it was originally transmitted orally.[5] We find similar stories in later folklore, such as the motif E231 *Return from the dead to reveal murderer*.[6] A typical feature of storytelling, as discussed in Chapter 2.2, is that the storyteller adapts his or her story to the audience. They can put in or take away details, make the story short or long. Unlike the case with literature, no authoritative version exists, and variation is a typical feature of folklore (see Chapter 2.1). The three ancient versions of this story do not differ greatly, yet they show some variation in detail, which could suggest an oral rather than a literary origin.

The stories of haunted houses discussed in Chapter 9.3 can be demonstrated to be either directly, or indirectly via a literary work, of oral origin. Plautus' (fl. *c.* 205–184 BC) *The Haunted House*, better known by its Latin title, *Mostellaria*, was based on a play from Attic New Comedy: Philemon's (fl. *c.* 300 BC) *The Ghost*, i.e. *Phasma*. But despite this literary derivation, it has been plausibly argued that the story of a haunted house was based on folkloric tradition.[7]

Pliny the Younger's (*c.* AD 61–*c.* 112) story about a haunted house in Athens is a typical example of our fifth criterion for identifying folklore in the ancient texts, that the author emphasises that he has heard the story.[8] To the addressee of the letter, Lucius Licinius Sura, he writes that he will tell the ghost story "as I heard it" (see Chapter 2.4). The story of the haunted house is also told in a manner as if the teller was talking to a wider audience.[9] There is a great deal of semblance between the texts of Pliny the Younger and Lucian

(b. *c.* AD 120) respectively. Some scholars have argued that Lucian's parodic text was based on Pliny the Younger's story,[10] whereas other scholars have contended that the origin of both Pliny the Younger's and Lucian's texts were widely spread oral traditions.[11]

9.1 Quickly Covered by Sandy Soil: The Restless Spirit of Socrates

In this subchapter, we return to a text already discussed in some detail in Chapter 7.1 – Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* book 1.5 to 1.20: Aristomenes' Story, that is the story about Aristomenes, Socrates and the witches – to discuss yet another aspect. In previous scholarly work, there has often been a focus on Meroe's evil deeds – the brutal murder, resembling ritual slaughter, of a lover who dared leave her – whereas, in our view, it is yet another aspect that ought to come into the fore: that the murdered man never received proper funerary rites, as he was only quickly covered by sandy soil.

While it is not specifically mentioned in the text, the consequences of this would have been apparent to the ancient reader, for without these funerary rites and a grave proper, Socrates would have ended up as a restless spirit: a ghost. Before presenting the arguments for this hypothesis, however, other matters have to be discussed, commencing with Socrates' triple death and continuing with his hasty burial, if indeed "burial" it can be called.

Death is a recurrent theme in this story, and Socrates does not merely face death once, but in fact twice, or, to be more precise, thrice. Let us therefore dwell briefly on Socrates' triple death. In the beginning of the story, when the two friends have just met in the streets of the town of Hypata in Thessaly, Aristomenes tells Socrates about the sorry fate of his family during his long absence, the duration of which was so long that he was believed dead:

> But at home you have already been lamented and bewailed, your children have been given guardians by decree of the provincial judge, and your wife, having rendered the funeral services and disfiguring herself with long-lasting grief and mourning – almost weeping her eyes into uselessness – is urged by her parents to cheer up the misfortunate household with the joys of a new marriage.[12]

While still alive – if indeed only barely, as he is severely maltreated by the malicious witch Meroe – funeral services had been performed by his family. Socrates was officially declared dead, and his family regarded him as dead, but there was no body to bury. Moreover, this was a family that ceased to exist, his wife being forced to re-marry and his children having been given tutors.

A second death occurs not long after Aristomenes and Socrates meet in town. Socrates is brutally murdered – a murder involving the mutilation of his body, presumably for magical purposes – by the avenging Meroe. As we have seen in Chapter 7.1, this horrific act takes place in the dead of night, at an inn where the two friends are staying the night. As we recall, Meroe cuts Socrates' throat with a sword, empties his body of blood and tears out his heart, replacing it with a sponge on which she has put a magical spell. The magical sponge keeps Socrates "alive" – it enables him to wake up the following morning as the porter bursts into their room in the inn. Although in fact dead, Socrates can leave the inn with Aristomenes.

Socrates' third death is soon to occur, for having been emptied of blood and having his heart torn out, it is not long before he wants to stop for a rest: "… and even now I'm out of breath: my knees are shaking and my gait is reeling, and I want something to eat to restore my breath". The latter is a play with words: Socrates wants to restore his breath (*refovendo spiritu*), or alternately revive his spirits; the phrase can be interpreted in both ways. Being thirsty after his meal, he goes down to a brook to quench his thirst. As soon as his lips are about to touch the surface of the water, the sponge falls out, and Socrates drops dead. In other words: his spirit leaves the body.[13]

It was then and there that Socrates' cruel fate was finally sealed, but, as we shall see, this was both presaged and planned by Meroe as part of her grisly revenge. His body is left on the bank of the brook at which they stopped, merely being quickly covered with sandy earth.[14] Let us briefly discuss this aspect in more detail, for it is clear that Apuleius wanted to emphasise it, as it is mentioned twice in the text.

The first mention is the scene in which the two witches have broken into Aristomenes and Socrates' room. For, as Meroe makes clear to Panthia – and to the petrified Aristomenes who lies under a bed turned upside-down – Socrates' corpse is to be buried under a thin cover of earth (*corpus parvo contumulet humo*). This ominous utterance not only presages the fate that Socrates will suffer, being denied proper burial rites and a real grave, it strongly suggests that it was a planned part of Meroe's revenge on the man who had abandoned her. Again, as we have seen, when Socrates falls down dead in the brook, Aristomenes drags him up on the bank, after which he: "… covered him with sandy soil …" (*arenosa humo … contexi*).[15]

In our view, Apuleius wanted to accentuate that Socrates was deprived of proper funerary rites and denied a real grave; as a comparison, we can take another story in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, in which a person was bestowed a burial proper with the traditional funerary rites: "The Tale of the Miller's Wife".[16] The miller is described as a very decent man, who stands in stark

contrast to the miller's wife. She is portrayed as an alcoholic with a crazed lust for wine and men alike, stubborn and imprudent; in other words, a portrayal akin to that of the witch Meroe. But while Meroe is a witch herself, the miller's wife has to receive help from a witch.[17] This is in an act of desperation, for having found out about his wife's infidelities, the miller decides to divorce her, and then she decides to enlist the aid of the witch.[18]

First failing to perform love magic to turn the mind of the miller, the evil witch "murders" the poor man, by exploiting the restless spirit of a woman who has died a violent death. But although he himself dies a violent death, having hung himself, the miller is not deemed to become a ghost himself.[19] He is an innocent victim of an unfaithful and faithless wife, and his dead body is treated in accordance with the traditional funerary rites.

The funerary rites of the miller involved the beating of breasts and intense bewailing. Following the funerary rites he was then washed and laid out,[20] and after the wake he is carried to his grave accompanied by a large burial procession. Finally, the following day, his daughter, who has hastened from a neighbouring town, comes to the grave to grieve and mourn for the deceased. After nine days, the customary rituals had been duly performed by his grave (*tumulus*). The treatment of the deceased miller strongly underscores the importance of carrying out the correct funerary rites; moreover, it stands in stark contrast to the treatment Socrates received.[21]

Socrates was but briefly bewailed by a single person – Aristomenes – with what little time was permitted (*pro tempore*).[22] Then his corpse was presumably left in the clothes he was wearing, and he was neither washed nor anointed. Rather than receiving a real grave, he was hastily covered with sandy earth. As his friend Aristomenes fears being accused of murder, he flees the place and enters a "voluntary" exile; hence Socrates' final resting place will remain unknown to his family.

As we have seen in the Tale of the Miller's Wife, proper funerary rites were not important alone, the grave itself was of equally great importance. If we turn to yet another "ghost-story", the Pseudo-Virgilian work *The Gnat*, the significance of the grave is strongly emphasised. Let us therefore briefly dwell upon this aspect of the narrative. The story in this poem can be summarized as follows: A shepherd who has fallen asleep under some trees, is saved from certain death by a courageous gnat. The shepherd is under threat of being bitten by a lethally poisonous snake. The gnat bites the shepherd – waking him up and thereby saving his life – but his reward is thankless and bitter; the shepherd instinctively kills the gnat as it bites him. The gnat returns as a ghost at night when the shepherd is asleep, asking for a proper funeral to be

able to come to rest,[23] and the pious shepherd erects a grave-tomb to honour his saviour:

> … near the stream hiding behind green foliage, the diligent man undertakes to shape a place. He designed it as a circle, and took up his staff again to use it instead of an iron tool, digging up the grassy earth from the green turf. With careful concentration, he carried out the work he had begun and heaped up a structure; a grave made of earth, with a broad rampart, materialised in the circle he had formed. Around it, with unremitting concentration, he joined together stones of smoothed marble. In this place will grow acanthus and also the bashful rose, with its purple blush, and all kinds of violets….[24]

As the two examples discussed above clearly demonstrate, traditional funerary rites and a real grave were of tremendous importance. Having met a violent death, being denied proper burial rites and a grave, Socrates is doomed to end up as a restless spirit: a ghost.[25] Socrates future fate – to become a ghost – is in fact presaged from the very beginning.

So, let us once again go back to the beginning of this fascinating story. When Aristomenes finds his old friend Socrates sitting on the ground, the poor man is in a sorry state with tattered clothes and pallid appearance. Aristomenes likens him to a ghost (*larvale simulacrum*).[26] As we have discussed in Chapter 7.1., this is a pun on his name, for philosophers were often portrayed as pale-faced misers, almost ghost-like in appearance, in ancient literature. [27] But, as we argue in this chapter, Apuleius also employs these precise words for another purpose. They foreshadow the future fate of Socrates: he will end up as a restless spirit or ghost (*larva*). Socrates, with his torn and tattered clothes and pallid and emaciated appearance, strongly resembles the female ghost in the Tale of the Miller's Wife: "… she was half-clothed in a sordid cloth of many colours, her feet were bare and unprotected, and she was disfigured by emaciation and the pallor of boxwood".[28]

Apuleius uses a number of different terms for "ghost" in this specific story, among others, *larva*.[29] In Latin we find a number of terms that denote "ghosts": *manes*, *umbrae*, *imagines*, *species*, *lemures* and *larvae*. The latter two – *lemures* and *larvae* – usually designate ghosts of a malevolent, and distinctly dangerous, type, whereas the terms *manes* and *umbrae* typically signify benevolent ghosts. The use of the various terms is, however, far from clear-cut. [30] In another of Apuleius' works, *On the God of Socrates*, we find a definition of a number of these terms, and among these, *larvae*:

> … but those who are punished with uncertain wandering as some kind of exile because of the offences they committed in their life – and who have received no grave – are an empty fright to good people and otherwise a harm to the bad; this kind most people call *Larvae*.[31]

Socrates was thus likened to a ghost – more specifically a restless spirit of one who had received neither the proper funerary rites nor been given a grave, and moreover one who had committed evil deeds in his life – a *larva*. There can, in our view, be little doubt about Socrates' fate when he is likened to a *larva* at the very onset of the story: he will become a restless spirit who will roam the face of the earth.

9.2 Murder in Megara

As mentioned above, murder is a recurrent theme in many ghost stories – in the previous subchapter we discussed the brutal murder of Socrates and the fate that we argue followed: becoming a restless spirit. In this subchapter, we will continue with a closely related theme – the ghosts of those who died a violent death, returning either in dreams or as apparitions – beginning with a story about a man murdered in Megara in Greece. Three related variants of this story have survived, two of which are very closely related: one in Cicero's *On divination*,[32] the other in Valerius Maximus' *Memorable deeds and sayings*.[33] In addition to these, there is a slightly different version found in a fragment from Aelian.[34] The story, in the variant of Valerius Maximus, is as follows:

> Even though the next dream takes somewhat longer [to recount], its vividness is too great to omit it. Two friends from Arcadia travelled together and came to Megara. One of them betook himself to a guest-friend, the other lodged as a guest at an inn for profit (*tabernam meritoriam*). In his dream, the one staying with a friend saw his companion begging him to assist him, as he was beset by the plotting innkeeper: he could still be dragged out of imminent danger if the other ran swiftly to his aid. Having seen this, the latter was excited and sprang up, and tried to go to the inn where his friend was lodging as a guest. Then due to the baleful destiny of his friend, he condemned this most humane intention as unwarranted, and returned to sleep in his bed. Then his friend presented himself – wounded – entreating him to at least not deny him vengeance for his death, since he had neglected to aid him in life. For his body, slaughtered by the innkeeper, was at just that moment being carried by cart to the gate, covered with dung. Urged by his friend's persistent prayers, he ran directly to the gate and seized the cart that had been pointed out to him during his rest, and brought the innkeeper to capital punishment.[35]

As discussed above there was an apparent temporal aspect in relation to danger and fear (Chapter 8.1), not least when it came to travel. During the day, travelling along the roads was regarded as tiresome and often tedious, whereas the night in turn was perceived as a perilous time, more particularly so if one

was staying at an inn. Inns played a prominent role in the emotional topography of the ancient city, its surroundings and also the countryside (Chapter 8.3).[36] It is, for instance, no coincidence that the witch-story discussed in Chapters 7.1 and 9.1 – the brutal attack on Aristomenes and the murder of his friend Socrates – takes place at an inn in the dead of night.

As a traveller having no friends or family relations in the area, you had no other choice than to stay at an inn. Remaining outdoors, travelling on the roads and risking to be robbed by highwaymen, was by far more dangerous. Yet having to stay the night at an inn appears to have made many feel defenceless and under threat, or at least that is what the various stories about inns suggest. In the story of the "Murder in Megara", this is put in contrast to an environment where you were thought to be safe, far from danger of any sort. The ancient reader – or listener too for that matter – would not have been surprised to hear that the man murdered was staying at an inn, whereas his friend staying with friends was perfectly safe.

The man staying at the inn came to his friend in his dream as an apparition, pleading for help as he feared for his life, being robbed by the innkeeper. (In Aelian's version, it is made clear that the innkeeper robbed him of his gold).[37] The sleeping man wakes up in a state of terror, but believing it to be but a nightmare, he decided to ignore it and fell asleep again. The apparition or ghost appears once again in a dream and tells his friend that the innkeeper has killed him, and, moreover, that the murderer has arranged to secretly remove his corpse under a cartload of dung,[38] presumably to hide it away somewhere in the countryside. In other words, the dead man – the ghost – is well aware that, should this succeed, he will receive neither funerary rites nor a grave.

The dead returning to the living – as ghosts or apparitions in dreams – to divulge crimes committed against them, is a theme common to a number of ghost stories.[39] For instance, we find two examples of this in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. The first is the story of Charite and her beloved husband Tlepolemus, who was thought to have been accidentally killed whilst out hunting with a friend, Thrasyllus. This was no hunting accident, however, but a deliberate murder by Thrasyllus, who wanted to marry Charite by making her a widow. Appearing in her dream as "a blood-stained and gory figure, disfigured by pallor", Tlepolemus warns his wife of marrying his murderer, Thrasyllus.[40]

Correspondingly, we have a second example in the Tale of the Miller's Wife, discussed above. In his daughter's dreams, the murdered miller returned to reveal the crimes of her maleficent stepmother: adultery, sorcery and murder. [41] If, and if so in what way, she was punished is never mentioned.

What is made clear is that the entire household – the house and furniture, the slaves and animals – were sold off. The stepmother would thus presumably have been left without any means to survive.

Returning to the story of the "Murder in Megara", the ghost is very specific in what he wants: his death to be avenged. He tells his friend of the crimes committed to make sure the proprietor of the inn is punished. More importantly, although it is not specifically mentioned, it is to make certain that the body hid under the muck is stopped from being driven out of town, presumably to be unceremoniously dumped in a ditch or hidden in a hole dug in the ground. Again, we find an example of how death itself appears to have been less dreaded than the fear of not receiving the proper funerary rites, and of being left unburied.

9.3 Haunted Houses: Victims Without Graves

Let us now turn from the stories about the "Murder in Megara" to other ghost stories revolving around the dead not having received the right funerary rites. Three relatively lengthy ghost stories – concerning ghosts of men who had met a violent death through murder, and the houses which these ghosts haunted – have survived in the works of Plautus,[42] Pliny the Younger[43] and Lucian,[44] respectively.[45]

All three stories are comic in nature.[46] Plautus' *Mostellaria* was a comic play, which in turn was based on a play from Attic New Comedy: Philemon's *Phasma*.[47] The ghost story in Pliny the Younger's *Letters* was by no means meant to entertain; quite to the contrary, it was intended as part of a serious discussion between Pliny the Younger and his friend Lucius Licinius Sura concerning the existence of the super-natural. Yet it seems plausible that the story originally had the purpose of entertaining, as it contains a number of elements which appear humorous. The third story is found in Lucian's *Philopseudes*. The very name of Lucian's work – *Philopseudes*, i.e. *The Lover of Lies* – suggests its nature: it satirises superstition, in a highly ironic and amusing tone.[48]

It is worthy of note that none of these haunted houses were to be found in Italy; in fact, all three are supposed to have been situated in Greece. Plautus' *Mostellaria* is set on a street in Athens[49] and Pliny the Younger's story is set in a house in the same city.[50] Lucian's story is instead located in the house of Eubatides in Corinth.[51] This is perhaps not surprising, given that these stories were inspired not only by oral traditions, but are equally coloured by literary influences.

These stories have been extensively treated in previous research,[52] but let us nevertheless take a closer look at them, beginning with the earliest: Plautus' *Mostellaria*. In this comic play, the slave Tranio hastily makes up a story about a ghost haunting the house – when the master of the house, Theopropides, unexpectedly returns to Athens after three years abroad – to stop him from discovering his son's corrupt and spendthrift life with a courtesan. Philolaches, once a young man of high morals, a role model for the local youths, is now a victim to his emotions, love having made him lose all his senses.[53] To hide this fact from his father – by stopping him from entering his own house and thereby discovering the son and his friends – Tranio tells Theopropides:

> Hear what the dead man said to him in his sleep: "I am a guest from overseas, Diapontius. I live here: this is the habitation given to me. For Orcus did not want to receive me into Acheron, since I lost my life prematurely. I was deceived through trust: my wicked host killed me and hid me away in secret, unburied (*insepultum*) in this very house, for the sake of gold. Now depart! This house is accursed (*scelestae*), this habitation is ungodly (*impia*)". [54]

The play *Mostellaria* displays many similarities with the "Murder in Megara" story, but whereas the latter murder took place at an inn – conceivably a dangerous place – this was in contrast supposed to have happened in a friend's house;[55] in other words, in a place thought to be safe, in no way associated with danger, or for that matter fear. The name of the murdered man, Diapontius, which can be translated as "Across the Sea", is of course appropriate for a guest-friend who has travelled from afar; and although the story is fictional, it appears to reflect one aspect of reality: dangers, both imaginary and real, related to travel. Yet another feature that it has in common with the "Murder in Megara" story, and with a number of other stories, is the motive for the murder: the theft of gold.[56]

The shrewd slave Tranio claims that the young master, Philolaches, has seen the ghost of the murdered man in a dream. He then goes on to claim that the house is haunted by this ghost, whose corpse was hidden in the house, hence it is not possible to enter. For, as pointed out above, being buried *without due rites*, the spirit of the deceased was thought not to be let into the Underworld, but left to roam the face of the earth as a ghost for a century. But whereas other ghosts – in dreams or as apparitions in the night – request being buried, Diapontius acts in quite a contrary manner, commanding the true owner to leave, claiming the house as his dwelling place.[57]

Tranio claims to have heard the door creak and knocking, sounds supposedly made by the ghost, leaving Theopropides in a state of terror: "I scarcely have a drop of blood left: the dead are fetching me to Acheron alive!"[58] Theopropides' deeply felt fear and unease at facing death – in the

form of a ghost – hinders him from entering the house. From the audience's perspective, his fear was most probably regarded as funny, possibly hilarious, and the stark contrast between the emotions enhances the drama.

Not surprisingly, the hastily made-up story has a long row of logical lapses, making Tranio appear a poor liar, and even ludicrous. The most apparent logical flaw in his story is the question why the house was not haunted earlier, given that the murder of Diapontius supposedly had taken place some sixty years past. Tranio accuses the former owner of the house – who is still alive – of having committed this horrendous crime. As pointed out by Debbie Felton, that must have been less than likely, or he would have been very old indeed.[59] And, rather than asking for a burial – a typical feature of many ghost stories, as it enabled the spirit of the deceased to enter the Underworld and thereby come to rest – Diapontius makes it clear that he has settled in the house. Yet another example of inconsistencies is that the scene with the sounds of creaking doors and knocking – allegedly from the ghost – takes place in broad daylight. Yet ghosts rarely appear during daytime, they were normally thought to materialise at midnight and vanish at cockcrow.[60]

These apparent logical lapses were of course put in for comic effect – portraying Theopropides as something of a numbskull and a deeply superstitious person – not realizing that Tranio must have made the whole thing up. But when Theopropides returns, Tranio believes himself to be in grave danger – exclaiming: "Tranio is dead" – dreading crucifixion and considering himself as good as dead.[61] To the Roman mind, a slave threatened with crucifixion was simply hilarious, and in Plautus' plays there are numerous examples of slaves being verbally intimidated with threats of torture and death, but at that they remain.[62] To avoid torture and death, Tranio makes up this story about a dead man, a man murdered and turned into a ghost. When the father finally finds out that the slave had lied to save his young master, a common theme in Roman comedy, he forgives both the shrewd slave Tranio and his spendthrift son Philolaches.

If we move on to Pliny the Younger's ghost story – which supposedly took place in Athens – it resembles that of Plautus' *Mostellaria* in some respects. But, as stressed above, Pliny the Younger is absolutely earnest in his letter to his friend Sura:

> Accordingly, I would very much like to know whether you think ghosts exist and have a form of their own and some kind of divine power, or if they are lifeless and insubstantial (*inania et vana*) and receive a semblance from our own fear. Personally, I believe they exist…[63]

The actual narrative is as follows:

Isn't what I will now relate just as I heard it both more terrible and no less wonderful [than the previous story]? There was in Athens a spacious and roomy, though disreputable and unwholesome house. In the silence of the night, a sound could be heard, and if you listened keenly, there was a rattle of chains, first at a distance, then close by. Soon afterwards a phantom (*idolon*) appeared, an old man marked by emaciation and filthiness, with a long beard and shaggy hair; he wore fetters on his legs and chains on his hands, and he was shaking them. Henceforth the inhabitants stayed awake from fear throughout the gloomy and dreadful (*tristes diraeque*) nights. As their terror grew, illness and death followed upon their sleeplessness. During the day, the memory of the ghost was also fixed in their imagination, even though the ghost (*imago*) itself had departed, and their fear (*timor*) continued longer than the cause of this fear [was present]. Therefore, the house was deserted and condemned to solitude, and all of it was left to the monster (*monstrum*); but the house was advertised, if someone ignorant of this evil would want to buy or rent it.

The philosopher Athenodorus came to Athens, read the notice and, on hearing the price, made inquiries as the cheapness was suspect, and was told everything, and yet rented it on this very account. When it was twilight, he ordered a couch to be arranged for him in the front part of the house, asked for writing-tablets, a stylus and a lamp, and dismissed all his servants to the interior. He turned his mind, eyes and hand to writing, so that his empty mind would not invent the phantoms (*simulacra*) he had heard of and vain fears (*inanes metus*). At first there was [only] the silence of the night, as there was elsewhere; then iron was being shaken, bonds stirred. [Athenodorus] did not raise his eyes nor abandon his stylus, but steeled his mind and pretended [that the sound was something else]. Then the noise increased, advanced as if now located at the threshold, now heard inside the room. He looked around, seeing and recognising the figure (*effigiem*) he had been told about. The [figure] was standing and made a sign with his finger as if summoning him. [Athenodorus], on the other hand, made a sign with his hand to make it wait a while, and applied himself once more to his writing-tablet and stylus. The [figure] rattled his chains over the head of the writer. Once again he saw the same [ghost] beckoning as before, and without delay Athenodorus took his lamp and followed. The other walked with a slow gait as if burdened by chains. Then he turned towards the courtyard, and suddenly dissolved and abandoned his companion. The deserted [philosopher] placed herbs and torn leaves on the site as a sign.

The next day he went to the magistrate, and exhorted them to order that spot to be dug up. They found bones thrust into and entangled in chains, with the body, which was putrefied by time and the earth, left bare and consumed [while still] in chains; collecting the [bones], these were publically buried. With the proper ceremonies [performed], the house was thereafter free from

> the buried shades (*manibus*). And this I certainly believe on account of those who confirm it….[64]

When the philosopher Athenodorus[65] arrives in Athens he finds a notice of the house for rent or for sale.[66] The hope is that someone from out of town, ignorant of the terrible fate that has befallen the house and its inhabitants, could be tricked into purchasing it. In the cities of the Roman world, not least in the city of Rome itself, the prices of housing property were inflated.[67] Yet the house in Athens is offered at a remarkably low price, which arouses the suspicions of Athenodorus. Hearing that the house was haunted does not discourage him, quite the opposite: this fact spurs him on, and he decides to rent it and move in with his household.

The ghastly sound of the ghost shaking his fetters evoked fear and terror – a fear that resulted in insomnia, ill health, even causing death among the former inhabitants of the house – while in contrast Athenodorus, being a philosopher, can control his emotions.[68] The first night he places his household in one room, whereas he sits in another reading and writing,[69] whilst waiting for the ghost to appear. Throughout the hours of the night, Athenodorus has complete control over his emotions, closing his mind to "the phantoms he had heard of and vain fears". When the ghost finally enters, with the fear-evoking sounds of clanking iron fetters and the rattling of the chains, the philosopher remains calm and collected.

This scene could well be a parody of the religious practices and rites performed during *Lemuria*, during which the *paterfamilias* in the middle of the night: "… clashes Temesan bronze, and asks the shade to depart from his house",[70] for the sound of metal was thought to scare off ghosts.[71] In Pliny the Younger's story, which also takes place at the dead of night, it is rather the shade – the ghost – who himself is making a metal noise, rattling the chains, to attract the attention of Athenodorus (and quite possibly the *paterfamilias* before him). To the Roman reader – or listener – turning the rites of *Lemuria* on their head may have been regarded as comic, fear being replaced by laughter.

In many respects, the description of the ghost – with long dishevelled hair – is typical,[72] with one exception: the iron fetters. Why then was the deceased man in fetters? Is it possible that he was an imprisoned houseguest, robbed and murdered? Or was it a slave being punished by being put in fetters? Or is it possible to present some other explanation? Why a houseguest would be held prisoner in a private home is difficult to conceive, hence this seems rather implausible. We know that house-slaves could be punished by being put in fetters, they could be sent to the countryside to be part of the chain gangs working at the large farm estates.[73]

As mentioned, this is what the slave Tranio in Plautus' *Mostellaria* feared when the Master, Theopropides, returns.[74] Alternatively, slaves could be put in chains and condemned to other types of hard labour,[75] for instance in mills or in quarries.[76] Physical maltreatment – even putting a slave to death – as a punishment for being insubordinate or in some way having threatened the master, was permitted from both a moral and legal perspective.[77] Had it been a slave, why did this killing then have to be disguised by hiding the corpse in a hole in the house?

Perhaps a more plausible explanation is that it was not the once living person that was put in fetters, but rather that these chains were meant as a magical means to confine the ghost, but that this magical act had in fact failed. In Pseudo-Quintilian's *Major Declamations,* we find a ghost story – a young man who after death used to return as a ghost in his mother's dreams – but who was hindered from doing so by magical means. The father, trying to stop the son from "terrorizing" the mother in her sleep, hired a magician: "To confine the shade with iron and stones … and first to bind it down with chains …".[78]

Whoever the ghost in Pliny the Younger's story was, it is clear that he was the victim of a hideous crime: murder, a crime concealed by hiding the body in the house. Thereby the deceased was doomed to wander the face of the earth, evoking the fear of the inhabitants and keeping them in a state of perpetual alarm.[79] The philosopher Athenodorus, in contrast, remains calm at the sight of the ghost and the ghastly noises it makes, and with a sign it beckons the philosopher to follow him. Walking through the house at a slow pace, the ghost suddenly vanishes, and Athenodorus marks the spot with leaves and grass. He turns to the local magistrates, who dig at the marked spot, finding a putrefied corpse in fetters. The deceased is honoured with the proper funerary rites and given a burial, and the house is haunted no more. Was the clever philosopher able to buy the property at its significantly reduced price? The answer to that we will never know, for the story ends with the ghost finding peace.

Turning to the last of the three stories of haunted houses – that in Lucian's *Lover of Lies* – we find a parody of ghost stories that may have been inspired by the ghost story in Pliny the Younger's *Letters*.[80] But in contrast to Pliny the Younger, who took the matter with great seriousness and clearly believed that ghosts could haunt houses, Lucian expresses his disbelief in stories of that kind, claiming them to be unwise tales told by men "with a penchant for lies".[81] But whereas Pliny the Younger's version is rather vague, Lucian's is filled with detail as the story is told in the first person.

The scene is set in the house of Eubatides which is situated in one of Corinth's suburbs, Kraneion, a place which according to Pausanias' (fl. *c.* AD

150) *Description of Greece* was famed for its tombs (among others that of the celebrated courtesan Laïs).[82] The person telling of his encounters with a ghost is the Pythagorean philosopher Arignotus. The haunted house was deemed uninhabitable, for anyone who dared enter was "chased out by a terrifying troubled ghost" (*phoberou kai tarachôdous phasmatos*).[83] This terror and fear led to the house in Corinth being given up to the ghost,[84] and the long since abandoned house showed clear signs of deterioration when the courageous Arignotus decides to put an end to the ghost's harassments of anyone trying to inhabit it.

In dealing with this restless spirit – an angered ghost – Arignotus makes use of Egyptian magic.[85] As he sits in a room by a lamp awaiting the ghost, it suddenly appears, and, despite its aggressive attacks, Arignotus is able to master the situation and drive it down into the earth with the help of Egyptian spells. At first it appears in the form of a typical ghost: "… squalid and long-haired and darker than the dark",[86] but soon it comes to resemble the shape-shifting of the chthonic goddess Hecate,[87] or an evil demon *empousa*.[88] The following morning they dug up the place where the ghost had disappeared; it was exhumed, treated with the appropriate burial rites and given a grave, and "from that time onward, the house stopped being troubled by ghosts".[89]

9.4 Fear, Superstition and Reverence

The common theme of these stories is fear-evoking ghosts, victims of violence, spirits of people who died before their time. The most important aspect was the fact that the deceased had been deprived of appropriate funerary rites, which resulted in them being denied entry into the Underworld, forcing them to roam the face of the earth as restless ghosts. This suffering did not only affect the deceased themselves, it caused fear in others too. This fear is articulated in different ways and to varying degrees in the narratives. The ghost story in Pliny the Younger's *Letters* places a great deal of focus on this emotion: how the ghost brought with it such fear that it broke the inhabitants' rest at night, ruined their health, in some cases to such a degree that even deaths occurred.[90] The fear is particularly linked to sound: Debbie Felton has pointed to the importance of the sound effects in the construction of the plot of this story.[91]

While the school to which Athenodorus belongs remains unstated, it is possible that the story is intended to be read in a Stoicising vein, as several known Stoic philosophers bore this name (see Chapter 9.3). Thus, it might be pertinent to consider the story in terms of the Stoic emotional grid, in

which fear, as one of the four basic emotions, comprised several subcategories. The exact vocabulary and definitions of diverse varieties of fear in different versions of the list tend to vary, but often some mention is made of fear elicited by sounds or by other sense impressions. One of these subclasses of fear was *thorubos* "alarm", a fear caused by the pressure of sound.[92] *Thorubos* was, in its more mundane incarnation, the noise made by a displeased audience in the Athenian Assembly, courtroom or theatre, and was thus extended to the fear caused by disturbing sounds in philosophy.[93] The role of sense impressions in eliciting fear is also acknowledged in other subclasses of fear, such as *kataplexis*, a fear caused by an overwhelming impression, and *orrôdia*, an affright springing from a perception.[94]

Although panic is usually not included in philosophical lists of types of fear, it is worth considering here because of the similarity between descriptions of panic and the fear depicted in Pliny the Younger's story, especially in the role of sound. It was also a well-known phenomenon in Graeco-Roman culture. Panic was normally construed as stirred by sudden noises hailing from an indistinct source, and it was often connected to the god Pan, hence its Greek name *panikos*, *paneia*. A typical situation of occurrence in the sources is military conflict: military encampments, especially at night, were perceived as susceptible to panic. This panic was further aggravated by the tricks played by the imagination, when the worst fears of those affected seemed to materialise.

The physical and mental state of potential sufferers of panic, particularly weakness and exhaustion, could be conducive to this condition, as people felt compelled to face a threat for which they were not ready or did not feel strong enough.[95] In Pliny the Younger's story, the imagination of the former inhabitants of the house runs rampant, making the fear felt at the ghost's approach more terrible than the fear at its actual arrival.[96] In addition, it is plausible to assume that their constant state of alarm at night left them mentally and physically exhausted, making them all the more easily prey to something like panic.

In other respects, the fear felt by the inhabitants of the house differs from panic in the proper sense. The most important difference is that panic arises from an inexplicable noise that usually remains mysterious; this is certainly not the case with the ghost, which is soon visible to the inhabitants and is therefore possible to recognise as the source of the sound. After his first appearance, the ghost's return is hardly a surprise to them; indeed, it is the fact that they know what he is that is most frightening. Though we may perhaps assume that the entire household could have been in the grips of this fear – which resembles panic – panic in the proper sense is eminently collective, not a lone pursuit.[97]

In Plautus' *Mostellaria*, fear is related to superstition: the shrewd slave Tranio is well aware of his master's superstitious mind-set, his deeply felt fears of supernatural creatures such as restless ghosts, and uses this fact to hinder him from entering his own house. The sounds from the inside of the house, supposedly caused by the ghost, almost scare him senseless, draining him of every last drop of blood. In Lucian, the topic of fear is clearly of less interest: whereas a great deal of emphasis is put on the fear that the ghost evoked and the effects this had in Plautus' and Pliny the Younger's stories, here the authorial voice reverberates with indignation at superstitious beliefs. Believing in ghosts – and for that matter any other type of superstition – is depicted as sheer stupidity.[98]

Lucian was certainly not the only one in the Graeco-Roman world to be indignant at superstition. It was generally decried in philosophy, superstition (Latin *superstitio*, Greek *deisidaimonia*) being defined as an excessive fear of the gods or other superhuman powers. Originally, the Greek word *deisidaimonia* seems to have signified appropriate piety; it emerges as a negative concept for the first time in the extant sources in Theophrastus' (*c.* 372/71–288/87 BC) *Characters*, in which he describes the stereotype of the "Superstitious Man" (*Deisidaimôn*). He is being ridiculed for his inordinate fear of incurring pollution and bad luck: he purifies his house often, fearing that Hecate has bewitched it; calls on Athena whenever he happens to hear an owl hoot; and will not view a corpse or visit a woman after delivery for fear of being polluted.[99]

Nevertheless, Theophrastus pours equal scorn on the impious man, (exemplified by the Squalid Man (*Duscherês*). This suggests that Theophrastus situated his characters in the context of the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean, which is not surprising given that he was Aristotle's student and successor as head of the school.[100] Thus, the ideal type of disposition would be situated somewhere between these two extremes, the superstitious and the impious person. Implicitly, it is clear that Theophrastus treated superstition as a permanent trait, i.e., as a more deep-seated mental disposition rather than a fleeting emotion.

In Plautus' *Mostellaria*, Theopropides' superstitious fear of ghosts violates the expectations the audience would have on the behaviour considered proper to a man of his station: he degrades himself through his fear, just as the Superstitious Man in Theophrastus does.[101] The comic effect significantly depends on the link between superstition and the ridiculous, already established in Theophrastus, and in Plautus it is epitomised in one of the stock characters of Roman comedy, the gullible old man (*credulus senex*).[102]

The association between superstition and fear was also prominent in Stoic philosophy, where superstition was sometimes classed as a subcategory of fear.[103] This relation is explicit in Plautus as well, as the deception is introduced by Tranio with the words: "… I'll see to it that he won't even dare look upon the house, to make him flee with veiled head in utmost fear". Since Plautus is an early source, the later development of *superstitio* into a concept chiefly applied to practices viewed as alien and subversive of Roman power[104] does not affect his depiction of Theopropides in the play. The negative connotations of *superstitio* may have had an impact on the other stories, however; at least this might explain why none of the stories studied here were set in Rome or Italy, but in Greece, where such disconcerting occurrences could safely be placed.

This kind of fictionalisation of the wondrous is not uncommon; we see a similar tendency in Old Icelandic sagas, in which encounters with the supernatural are portrayed differently depending on their setting. Encounters taking place on Icelandic soil tend to depict the supernatural as completely different from the everyday world – it is simply not part of the same world as the human world – whereas the human world and the supernatural sphere coexist in such dodgy places as Norway, which was distant enough to be a credible setting for supernatural events.[105]

Nevertheless, in the Roman world, the distinction between "superstition" and "religion" was not necessarily straightforward. Though some philosophers may have made a careful distinction between the "proper religion" of the philosopher and the superstition of common people, the very same behaviour could count as either of these, depending on the putative attitude of the actor. Thus, the "same" act carried out by a philosopher and a commoner would not, in effect, be the same, as the former would be approaching it with the correct mind-set, and the latter not.[106]

Similarly, the properly religious person diligently reviewed and rehearsed everything pertaining to the cult of the gods, whereas the superstitious man devoted whole days to prayer and sacrifice, for example in order to ensure that his children would survive him; Cicero even derived the word *superstitiosus* from this practice, making a connection to *superstes* "survivor". The superstitious man is evidently excessive, and perhaps applied his efforts to inferior ends.[107] That was another hallmark of *superstitio* in the Roman mind: using religion for personal rather than communal gain, or for evil purposes.[108]

In Pliny the Younger's and Lucian's stories, the ghosts are being faced by philosophers, in Pliny the Younger's probably by a Stoic, in Lucian's by a Pythagorean. This particular choice of philosophical schools is not coincidental, as neither Stoics nor Pythagoreans dismissed the possibility of the existence of ghosts. An Epicurean hero in narratives such as these would indubitably

have made for a rather poorly constructed plot, as the Epicureans vehemently rejected belief in ghosts, giving them a materialistic explanation.[109]

Lucretius (*c.* 94–55/51 BC) famously described ghosts as the "images of things" (*rerum simulacra*) cast off like membranes from their outermost surface, flitting about in the air. Therefore, the baleful apparitions people saw while awake or while sleeping, which so terrified their minds, were not real. They were not the spirits escaping from Acheron, or the shades of the dead flying about among the living, that people believed them to be; both body and soul were dispersed after death, and dissolved into their respective elements.[110] Pliny the Younger refers to this position in his appeal to his friend Sura to state his opinion on the existence or non-existence of ghosts preceding the story itself.

Athenodorus is more or less portrayed as a Stoic sage, or at least a presumptive one, as he remains utterly unperturbed by the haunting of the ghost. Debbie Felton has pointed to the way in which he focuses his mind, eyes and hand on his work in order to prevent his idle mind from imagining that he is seeing the ghost; she argues that this may have been counterproductive, as modern research has demonstrated that the mind is more receptive to hallucinations in a state of concentration.[111] For Pliny the Younger and his audience, it would probably have made perfect sense, however, as Athenodorus' strategy could be compared to Seneca the Younger's (4 BC/1AD–*c.* AD 65) when he put his fortitude to the test by living above a bath, a rather noisy environment which he vividly describes in one of his most celebrated letters to Lucilius. The trick was to "… force the mind to be intent on itself and not be distracted by externals".[112] Among these externals, he counted the emotions: if you were prey to the emotions, and especially if they were vying for supremacy within you, there was no hope of achieving peace of mind.

This brings us to Seneca the Younger's theory of the three stages of emotion. As we recall, Seneca conceived of emotions as diseases, and he was emphatic on the need to avoid emotion altogether, as they are so deceitful; they appear feeble at first, but gradually grow until they are impossible to stop any more:

> Then, if reason enjoys success, the emotions will not even arise; if they arise against the will of reason, they will also persevere against its will. For it is easier to avert them in the beginning than control their [subsequent] assault. […] You will more easily remove them than control them. Is there any doubt that the vices of the human mind, inveterate and unyielding as they are – we call them diseases (*morbos*) – are unrestrained, such as greed, cruelty, and unbridled passion? Accordingly, the emotions are unrestrained too. From the former we namely pass to the latter. Consequently, if you grant any kind of

> prerogative to sadness, fear (*timor*), desire, and the other vicious movements (*motus*), they will not be in our power. Why? Because they are excited through something that is [located] outside ourselves. Thus, they will grow in proportion to the magnitude of the causes which bring them about. Fear will be greater, if the cause of being frightened is perceived as greater or closer at hand …[113]

In speaking of anger, Seneca the Younger goes even further, stating that the emotion actually transforms the mind: anger turns the mind into that emotion, and the useful and salutary power of reason is no longer possible to call back. Therefore, by analogy, Athenodorus has embarked on a prudent route in deciding to nip fear in the bud. From Seneca's point of view, the most important step is to let any fear we happen to feel remain at the first stage of emotion, the involuntary mental shock (*ictus animi*) that sometimes assails our senses. Even sages experience these shocks, as they are entirely corporeal in nature, and experiencing them is not considered shameful.[114] The problem is constituted by the second and third stages, when we assent to this impulse and allow ourselves to be carried away by the emotion. Consequently, withdrawing assent to a frightening impression, as Athenodorus implicitly does, is of the utmost importance from a Stoic perspective.

As a philosopher well trained in virtues, Athenodorus has relinquished the emotional behaviour that was due to upsets in the pneumatic tension of the soul; the Stoics thought the soul consisted of *pneuma*, as mentioned in Chapter 4.3. He has overcome the softness and weakness of the soul that induce us to yield to shameful and enslaving emotional impulses, for instance in response to danger. Conceivably, he has submitted himself to strenuous moral exercise, thereby achieving a higher pneumatic tension, making it easier for him to continue to resist excessive emotional impulses. A virtuous man will immediately discover and do the right thing.[115]

In the story, Athenodorus decides to comply with the popular call for the proper burial of restless ghosts. Though the Stoics conceived of the human soul as ultimately perishable, just as the world's soul of which it was a part, it was nevertheless thought to survive death, at least for some time.[116] This did not affect their standpoint regarding the existence of an afterlife: only our actions in this life matter.[117] Athenodorus' willingness to assist the ghost will thus have to be explained as due to another, less metaphysical rationale, and this is with reference to the duty we as social beings have to show goodwill (*eunoia*) to other people.[118]

We believe this concession to popular morality could be reconciled with the gruelling demands on a Stoic sage, as the Stoic good emotions (*eupatheia*) included rational wish (*boulêsis*), a form of benevolence or respect. By helping

the ghost in this way, Athenodorus stands in for the children or relatives of the deceased; the family was expected to care for the burial and subsequent honouring of the dead, which was conceived of as part of the religious sphere in the form of proper respect (*eusebeia*). Whether this particular ghost had any relatives, or anyone else for that matter who could render him this final service, is of course very unclear. Athenodorus also exhibits a properly Stoic attitude to the service he performs for the ghost; he makes no fuss about it, and presumably moves on to the next act of goodness, silently and modestly.[119]

The Pythagorean philosopher, Arignotus, is also particularly apt for Lucian's story, as the Pythagoreans had an aura of wonder-working authority around them; the founder of the school, Pythagoras (b. *c.* 550 BC) himself, was dimly perceived in the Roman era as the holy man *par excellence*, and Apollonius of Tyana (d. *c.* AD 96) was not that far behind, acquiring a fame of his own persisting well into Byzantine times.[120] Alexander of Abonuteichos (second century AD), effectively lampooned by his contemporary Lucian, was another Pythagorean miracle-monger,[121] and it has been said that the uncanny and arcane was at home in Pythagoreanism from the very beginning.[122] Thus, Arignotus finds himself in excellent company.

Armed with a variety of books on Egyptian magic, Arignotus is not afraid to tackle the ghost; to the Roman mind, Pythagoreans and magic were also intimately connected.[123] The souls of the dead were part of a spiritual hierarchy in which the gods proper and the *daimones* or heroes who filled the air were accorded respectful attention,[124] and apparitions of the souls of the dead were considered entirely normal and not to be feared.[125] In many stories of ghosts related to Pythagoreans, these ghosts are the souls of intimates or even of Pythagoras himself,[126] while the ghost in Lucian's story is more akin to vengeful *daimones* or heroes in this respect, who had to be propitiated or left undisturbed.[127]

The daemonological theory underlying this notion of a spiritual hierarchy seems to have been shared with the Orphics, with whom the Pythagoreans were commonly juxtaposed. While conflating Orphics and Pythagoreans entirely might be imprudent from a modern scholarly point of view, the fact that many ancient sources did so – this is especially the case with late Neoplatonist sources, which add Plato (*c.* 429–347 BC) to the lot[128] – suggests that the distinction was not necessarily hard and fast, and that the characteristics of one movement tended to mingle with ones from the other in people's minds. Therefore, a comparison with Orphic views could be helpful.

In the Derveni papyrus, found in 1962 in a funeral pyre in Derveni, Macedonia, Northern Greece, and constituting an allegorising commentary on Orphic poems, there is one passage that is interesting to us in interpreting

Lucian's story. It states: "An incantation (*epôidê*) by *magoi* has the power to remove *daimones* that have become a hindrance; *daimones* that are a hindrance are vengeful souls [or: enemies of souls] (*psuchais ekhthroi*)".[129] The *magoi* were originally Persian priests,[130] and some scholars believe the Derveni author actually referred to them,[131] whereas others view these *magoi* as Greek magicians or even charlatans.[132]

By the Roman period, the *magoi*, Pythagoreans and Orphics could all be lumped together as a class of unsavoury sorcerers. Pliny the Younger's uncle, Pliny the Elder (AD 23/24–79), for instance, produced a long disquisition on the practices of Persian *magoi*, and confessed himself to be tempted to attribute the introduction of magic in Thessaly to Orpheus, were it not for the fact that magic was allegedly unknown in his native Thrace. Pythagoras, he also tells us, travelled abroad to learn the craft, and was one of those who integrated magic into the mystery cults.[133]

In the Derveni papyrus, the obstructing *daimones* hinder the souls of the dead on their way to a blessed afterlife,[134] whereas Arignotus confronts a more conventional ghost disturbing the lives of the living. In both instances, however, these beings are troublesome, and magical incantations are employed to drive them away. Arignotus draws his from Egyptian books on magic, which might be a reference to magical papyri of the type found in Graeco-Roman Egypt, as several scholars have pointed out.[135] It might also relate to the supposedly Egyptian origins of some of Pythagoras' marvellous knowledge,[136] and to the fact that Pythagoreanism, after its initial heyday, survived in Egyptian Alexandria.[137]

Be that as it may, Arignotus' procedure reflects the circumstance that the precise identity of the ghost is unknown; in other sources, named ghosts could be laid to rest by calling them thrice by name into a cenotaph prepared for them.[138] Since the ghost resides in a house rather than in an unmarked grave outdoors, the ritual differs from the one described in the Byzantine lexicon *Suda* (compiled at the end of the tenth century AD), in which a black sheep is led around the grounds presumed to be haunted. The grave was located on the spot in which the sheep lay down, and, having found it, the performers of the ritual listened to the dead speaking (*akouousi legontôn*) and asked why they were angry. Interestingly, the lexicographer says nothing of exhuming the corpse to give it a proper burial; as Daniel Ogden wryly observes, "reality was not permitted … to compromise the success of the location technique", and he compares it to Lucian's story where the body really was dug up and reburied.[139]

9.5 "Death Is Nothing to Us" and the Folkloric Alternative

The different philosophical schools approached the therapy of the all-too-ubiquitous fear of death each in their own way, but the message was basically the same for Stoics, Epicureans and Cynics, though the supporting arguments differed: death is not an evil, and should not be feared. Many of these arguments are ostensibly geared to the fear of our own death, but they were readily transplanted to the deaths of others. The popular fear of inappropriate or complete lack of burial is often discussed in these contexts, and we are tempted to think that the frequency with which philosophical objections to this fear recurs attests to the widespread distribution of this belief among the populace.

Yet all philosophical treatments of this fear were not entirely scornful; Cicero describes the "ancient" (*cascos*) Roman views on death and the afterlife with some sympathy, stating that the ancients must have thought there was sensation after death, otherwise they would not have observed the rites of burial so scrupulously and condemned their violation as so utterly impossible to expiate. Instead, Cicero speculates, death was perceived as a migration and changing of life (*migrationem commutationemque vitae*), perhaps in some manner reminiscent of the Pythagorean belief in the transmigration of souls.[140] The Pythagorean doctrine implied that the soul travels from body to body, each construed as a microcosm of the divine All, in its attempt to achieve wisdom and become the All, usually forgetting its past lives as it enters a new body. Death then becomes a transitionary topos in-between embodiments.[141]

Generally, however, Cicero sided with the opposite claim, that death was nothing to be feared. He ridiculed the heroes of tragedy who revelled in the torture of the dead bodies of their enemies, denying them burial, as if they would be able to feel the punishment that was inflicted on them. The grave is not a "haven for the body" (*portum corporis*) in which it may find peace from evil, making the ill-natured wish for one's enemies to remain unburied a completely meaningless delusion. Therefore, he concludes, we should hold the very topic of death in contempt as it pertains to ourselves, but not concerning our nearest and dearest, as long as we understand that the bodies of the dead have no sensation. The living can of course make the necessary concessions to custom and reputation in performing funeral rites, but with full knowledge of the fact that this does not affect the dead themselves.[142]

Notwithstanding, Cicero championed the immortality of the soul with Plato and Pythagoras, and cited the precedent of Socrates' (the philosopher,

469–399 BC) indifferent attitude to the fate of his corpse with approval.[143] Before draining that final cup of hemlock, Socrates gave his friends free reins to bury his body if they wished, but stressed that his soul would not be possible to catch and bury in a tomb.[144]

The philosopher Socrates' attitude to death and burial, in sharp contrast to the common view in both Greek and Roman culture, was no doubt exploited by Apuleius. The comparison, however, remains implicit in the novel. As we have discussed above in Chapter 9.1, the fate of the fictional Socrates was to become a ghost, as he neither received the right funerary rites nor a real grave. This play between elements from folklore on the one hand, and classical literature on the other, is typical of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

The Cynics, Cicero continues in *Tusculan disputations*, entertained the same sentiment as the historical Socrates, but being more severe they expressed it more harshly. In the anecdote he cites to illustrate his point, Diogenes of Sinope (*c*. 412/403–*c*. 324/321 BC) told his followers he wanted to be thrown out unburied. When they protested, wondering whether he really wished to be cast to the birds and beasts, he replied:

> "Certainly not … but do put a stick nearby with which I can drive them away".
>
> "How could you," they [said], "for you will have no sensation".
>
> "Then what harm will it do me to be torn apart by beasts, if I have no sensation?"[145]

The Stoics, on their part, viewed death with indifference: since the moment and manner of our death are outside our control, it should not concern us.[146] Similarly, the deaths of our loved ones are equally outside our control. Epictetus (*c*. AD 50–125), who frequently used the thought of death as "a heuristic device", repeatedly emphasises this point.[147] The therapy for the fear of death, according to him, was to cease our fruitless attempts at controlling these things, over which we simply cannot wield any power. We should rather focus on those we actually can influence, such as our own vices and twisted ways of thinking. Epictetus suggests:

> If you try to avoid disease or death or poverty, you will be miserable. Remove your aversion for all those things that are not up to us, and transpose it to what is unnatural among those things that are up to us.[148]

Our own attitude to death and dying – embodied in our conceptions, impulses, desires and aversions – is one of those things that are up to us, and by working on that rather than trying to avoid death itself, we can assume control over our fear.

As for the fear of others' death, Epictetus recommends reminding ourselves of the fragile nature of human beings, who are destined to die from the moment they are born. In the *Manual*, he briefly sketches a therapeutic strategy intended to mentally prepare us for inevitable losses, progressing from the loss of the most mundane things in our lives to that of the most precious:

> With everything that is alluring, or of use, or loved (*stergomenôn*), remember to contemplate its nature, beginning with the most trivial. If you are fond of a pot, say "I am fond of a pot"; for when it is shattered, you will not be disturbed. If you kiss your child or wife tenderly, say that you are kissing a human being; for when it dies, you will not be disturbed.[149]

Harsh though it may seem, it has been argued that Epictetus is not being heartless. On the contrary, he is describing the life we have with others as a gift, recognising the sheer vulnerability of human life, especially in his day and age.[150] In the *Discourses*, Epictetus expands on the subject, and relates his therapeutic strategy to a regimentation of our expectations: we should be grateful for the time we get with our loved ones, yet realise that they are not given to us in order to be irrevocable or with us for all time.

If we long for those who have passed away, we are "yearning for a fig in winter", failing to appreciate the time we actually had together, and foisting our unrealistic expectations on the deceased, other people and even Zeus: for we have a tendency to curse both gods and men when such misfortunes strike us.[151] What is more, if we persist in this attitude, we might abuse this gift in the present, and hurt the people we love most.[152] For Epictetus himself, this stance was coupled with complete trust in the providence of Zeus, understood not only as the highest of the external gods, but also as an internal one, incarnated in man's perfected rational mind.[153]

As mentioned previously (see Chapter 4.2), the Epicureans regarded the fear of death as one of the two most detrimental fears of mankind, together with the fear of the gods;[154] Epicurean philosophy was largely conceived as therapy for these fears. Much of their therapeutic arguments hinge on the doctrine that the soul is mortal too, along with the body; since nothing of us survives death, it is futile to worry about what happens to us afterwards.[155]

If we resent the thought of being lacerated by birds and beasts, Lucretius posits, we have not truly embraced the idea of our non-survival after death; instead we feel sorry for ourselves, and infect our (imagined) dead body with the emotion we have now, thinking of this dire fate. We act as if there were some other self standing beside the dead one, lamenting it and feeling the pain of being lacerated.[156] This is quite irrational, Lucretius states, for if this was the case, we should be equally afraid of being cremated, embalmed, lying on a

cold slab of marble, or being crushed by the earth, implying that most people did not fear these things which indicate that a proper burial was performed.

In his *On death*, Philodemus of Gadara (*c.* 110–*c.* 40/35 BC) discusses the fear of not receiving an honest burial at length, dismissing the popular fear of this fate; the only person he concedes to be wretched on this account is the good-for-nothing, who has neglected to make the proper preparations for his burial, and who might therefore deserve our pity or reproach.[157] Yet his fate is miserable chiefly because it is attributable to his own deficient character, not to the intrinsic evil of remaining unburied. Philodemus continues:

> Whenever someone has both lived well and been furnished with friends worthy of himself – but happens to be prevented by fortune or the wickedness of men from receiving [the customary rites] – he will not be afflicted by the smallest pain, thinking to himself that he will not exist. For he will not possess that [i.e., a body] on which the painful supervenes, but rather the opposite. Neither will it occur to him that some people will find fault with him or consider him miserable [on this account], since no reasonable person would make this connection in thought; and as for those who do, they should not be heeded in this life, and much less at a time when we do not perceive them or [even] exist at all.[158]

Philodemus asserts that the virtuous person will rest content at the prospect of being denied burial, as he is convinced that nothing will be subtracted from his own virtue and happiness.

The modern discussion of the Epicurean doctrine has principally focused on the feelings of loss experienced by the person imagining himself deprived by death of the good things in life, criticising the Epicureans for their insensitivity to the import of projects and hopes of fulfilment in life.[159] The notion appears to have been common in antiquity as well, as Lucretius dismisses it as misguided. His example is interesting from our point of view, as he chooses to attack the laments commonly uttered by mourners at the funeral of a young man in his prime: he will no longer be received by a happy home and the best of wives, and his children no longer run up to him to catch sweet kisses and touch his heart with silent delight.[160] As Suzanne Dixon notes, "the delights of life are represented as the emotional pleasures of domesticity".[161]

What the mourners forget, according to Lucretius, is that the dead man no longer has any yearning for these things, and that it would be to the benefit of the mourners themselves to realise this, as it would rid them of much anguish and fear (*angore metuque*). We might imagine that this kind of lament was performed during the fictional Socrates' funeral, when his lawfully wedded wife believed him to be long lost and dead. Unfortunately for him, he was probably grieving the loss of these pleasures while still alive, with no

prospects of ever enjoying them again; Meroe was certainly doing her best to prevent that.

We suggest that the "death is nothing to us" argument served a therapeutic function, as it could be used as a strategy of risk reduction. Despite the fact that the concept of "risk" may be viewed as a modern one, and has sometimes been made out as exclusively applicable to the modern period,[162] this does not necessarily entail that it cannot be used as a heuristic device to understand the premodern era.[163] The major obstacle to recognising the existence of risk in premodern periods has been the belief in fate, which is interpreted as entirely constraining human behaviour, leaving human beings mere puppets of their destiny. This is an oversimplification of ancient beliefs on fate, which were multifaceted and sometimes contradictory,[164] and in no way implied that humans were not responsible for their own actions.

In the Roman world, the work of our modern concept of risk was done by other concepts, such as danger (Latin *periculum*, Greek *kindunos*) and fear. Fear in particular is close to risk, as both concepts refer to the occurrence of something unpleasant in the future: risk to the possibility of such an event, fear to the emotion caused by the imminence of that event. As we saw in Chapter 4, the future orientation of fear was explicitly articulated both in Aristotle's (384–322 BC) *Rhetorics* and in the Stoic emotional grid: fear is an emotional reaction to the possibility of the occurrence of an undesired event. Danger is the approach of this frightening event, and is more akin to the modern concept of hazard, which denotes a non-human agent striking human society from the outside, like a hurricane or a flood.[165]

The purpose of modern risk management is twofold: 1) to work on a specific risk object, individually or in groups, to change some of its properties, making the risk object less of a risk; 2) to change people's own behaviour *vis-à-vis* the risk object, thereby reducing the risk.[166] We propose that the "death is nothing to us" argument constitutes a kind of "risk management" of the second type: by belittling the dangers and consequences of remaining unburied, the "risk" is removed or at least minimised.

What all these philosophical objections – from Epicureans, Stoics and Cynics – fail to recognise, however, is that the belief in the restless state of the ghost remaining unburied is not really concerned with the issue of whether we have sensation after death or not, which is quite immaterial, but with the polluted state of the dead body.[167] As such, it could be a hazard to the living. Though it might be objected that this should be of no concern to the dead person – if he is indeed without sensation when dead – it does not necessarily follow that he should grossly neglect the welfare of those left behind.

Philodemus at least tends to condone such thinking; in speaking of the misery of dying, he is almost willing to admit that misery is justified if it leaves the family unprotected; i.e., dying can constitute a very real risk. But he is also adamant on the point that a virtuous person ought to make provisions for this eventuality, furnishing them with trusted guardians, and thus mitigating the adverse effects by taking the necessary precautions.[168] This was, as we saw above, something Socrates in Apuleius' story definitely failed to do. Similarly, concern for the living could have been warranted in this situation too, as the polluted dead body could still be perceived as a problem for them, for purely hygienic reasons if "superstitious" ones were disallowed;[169] the ancient Romans were not unaware of the unhealthy properties of putrescent bodies.[170]

The corollary notion of the restless soul being "out of place" does, admittedly, presuppose a conception of the immortality of the soul, and could be rejected on those grounds from a philosophical point of view. More importantly, however, the primary object of fear was not death itself, which is not described as an evil in and of itself, nor is any fear of punishment in Hades mentioned, which was the standard target of attack in Epicurean expositions on the subject. The restless ghost might even welcome being subjected to punishments in the Underworld, since that could be better than not being in Hades at all. Fear of the process of dying is not alluded to either.

The Pythagoreans differ from the other schools in that they would probably view death as a possibility rather than as something to be feared: dying and then entering a new existence could bring one further away from the true task of life – returning to the divine All – but it could also have more positive consequences. Death was also a way of shedding old patterns of thought and exploring new ones, thus potentially bringing the soul closer to communion with the All. Death could be an opportunity, not only an impediment to achieving our higher purpose.[171] To be successful in this endeavour, however, the soul had to recollect the previous bodies and lives it had inhabited, and remember the very fact of its history of transmigration, as Pythagoras himself had done.[172] For Pythagoras, philosophy constituted this very path of remembrance, and as such, it functioned as a preparation for death as well, sensitising the soul to the need to return to the All.[173] Therefore, even the anxiety we may feel before death, so decried by other philosophers, can serve to remind us of this need, prompting us to cultivate this most noble of aspirations.

As is apparent from this lengthy exposé of philosophical therapies for the fear of death and of remaining unburied, none of them could easily assimilate our stories into their framework. At most they could be used to illustrate how the virtuous person should not view the prospect of remaining

unburied. Instead, it seems the ghost stories offer another route to the therapy of fear, one intimately connected to the functions of oral legends: their ability to furnish models of action, and to evaluate the success of different strategies of action within the confines of the plot.[174]

This narrative modelling of action is exploited in diverse ways in the stories. It is drawn on to construct the rather hastily assembled plot of Tranio's ghost story in Plautus, functioning as a model of action for Tranio in the very act of narration. In Pliny the Younger and Lucian, the successful kind of mediator between the living and the restless dead – a philosopher – is presented, a choice that implies an ideological evaluation of the peculiar status and capabilities of this profession.[175] Here the victorious course of action, and the appropriate type of agent, is being modelled.

That is not the only thing that is being modelled, however. Though it is an aspect that is usually not taken into account in folkloristic research, as the focus tends to be on the human victims suffering from the depredations of restless souls,[176] the stories also provide models of action *for ghosts*. In our case, if the prospect of not receiving a decent burial is so terrifying, or rather the thought of not being properly alive and not properly dead so vexing that it results in a fear of death, the idea comes across that a ghost *is* able to take action to mitigate its suffering, which might be deeply comforting. By consoling ourselves with the thought that we too could opt for this solution if nothing else works, the fear could be diminished. As the stories seem to presuppose a continuity of memory in the restless ghost – obviously, it remembers the wrongs done to it, otherwise it would not make a fuss about them or consider itself to have reason to be vengeful – so we too could recall the line of action suggested by these stories, and terrify people into burying us.[177]

For the ghosts in the stories do get their burial, having pressurised people sufficiently. The problem is making them understand. Since many ancient ghosts were not supposed to be able to speak, and special rites had to be performed to allow them to communicate (witness the ritual described in the *Suda*, which ended in making the angry ghosts speak and convey their concerns),[178] this could be regarded as a real quandary. Pliny the Younger's ghost resolves it by beckoning to the philosopher to follow him. Plautus' ghost, and the ghost in the "Murder in Megara" story appear in dreams, which was an easy way for ghosts to communicate with the living.[179] Lucian's mindlessly aggressive ghost makes no attempt at communing with Arignotus, which makes it more akin to the restless ghosts raised by magic to do the dirty work of witches, as in Apuleius' "The Tale of the Miller's Wife" (see Chapter 9.2).

10 Intruders from the Deep

Octopuses and Killer Whales

The city, that quintessentially human environment, emerges as an embattled site in many stories in urbanised societies across time and space. In the modern world, we have legends of boa constrictors hiding in toilets,[1] sewer rats posing as pet dogs[2] and, naturally, alligators lurking in the sewers of New York and other big cities.[3] In Victorian London, the sewers were allegedly haunted by a particularly ferocious breed of swine, sometimes described as black in colour,[4] and in ancient Rome, the sewers were supposed to be frequented by octopuses.[5] It is to these latter stories of intruders from the deep that we will now turn.

The sewers form a category of their own in the emotional topography of the ancient Roman city: a part of the city of which people were aware, yet it was inaccessible and mostly hidden from sight as the sewers were underground. The attitude towards sewers was one of ambivalence. Sewers on the one hand constituted structures considered worthy of pride, evidence of the impressive engineering abilities characteristic of the Roman culture. On the other hand, sewers evoked other emotions, most importantly disgust and dread.

Unlike the more recent legends, however, the ancient ones do not exclusively favour the sewers as the sole conduit for this intrusion of wild nature into the man-built environment. In one preserved variant of the legend, the octopus does indeed use the sewers as the means of entering human edifices, but in another, the octopus climbs a tree to encroach on the human precinct. The common denominator is the reason for the intrusion, namely the human food the octopus covets: salted fish. The predilection of marine animals for human food or human products is a theme recurring in a third story, which is quite similar in character, of a killer whale entering the port of Ostia, enticed by the prospect of feasting on raw hides from a sunken ship.[6] All three stories are incorporated into accounts of natural history, and are employed to highlight the qualities considered typical for the animals in question.

10.1 The Octopus in the Sewers

The first story forms part of Aelian's (AD 165/170–230/235) *On the Characteristics of Animals*, which also gave us our story of the monkey babysitter (Chapter 6.1):

> Octopuses gradually grow huge, and approach cetaceans [i.e. whales, dolphins and porpoises] and are even counted amongst them. Indeed, I hear of an octopus in Dicaearchia [Puteoli] in Italy, which attained an arrogant body mass, and it came to despise and disdain the food from the sea and its pasture. Then it approached land and seized food, also from dry land. Through a certain hidden sewer expelling the filth of the aforementioned city into the sea, it swam up and entered a house lying by the sea. There Iberian merchants stored their cargo, salted fish from their region in stout vessels; and it threw its tentacles around the earthenware, gripping it so that the vessels were broken, and consumed the salted fish.
>
> As the merchants entered and saw the fragments of pottery, understanding that a large quantity of their cargo had disappeared, they were astounded and could not guess who had despoiled them, as the doors were free of tampering; the roof was undamaged; and the walls had not been dug through. They also saw the remains of the salted fish that had been left behind by the uninvited guest. They decided that one of the servants, the most courageous, would be armed and left behind in the house, lying in ambush. During the night the octopus crept up to its acccustomed meal and clasped the vessels just as a prize fighter would in taking a strangle-hold on his antagonist: by force and holding very firmly. So the robber, i.e., the octopus, crushed the earthenware very easily.
>
> It was a full moon and the house was illuminated, and everything could be taken in at a glance. The servant did not attack on his own as he was afraid of the beast (it was too great for one man), but early in the morning he explained to the merchants what had happened. They could not believe what they were hearing. Then some remembered the greatness of their losses and advocated venturing the hazard, eager to meet the enemy in battle; others, in thirsting for this novel and incredible sight, locked themselves [into the house] as voluntary allies together with the former. In the evening, the thief again comes to visit, and hastens to its customary dinner. Then some block up the conduit, others arm themselves against the enemy, and with choppers and sharpened razors cut through the tentacles, as vine-dressers and woodcutters lop off the young shoots of an oak. Having cut its strength, they killed it after a long time with toil and not a little labour, and the strange thing was that merchants hunted the fish on land. Mischief and craft plainly seem to be characteristic of this animal.[7]

The story opens with a general reference to the near monstrosity of octopuses; the statement conjures an image of their almost uncontrollable growth, which more or less makes them leave their own taxonomic order and enter another one, that of whales. This "ontological liminality",[8] blurring the boundary between different species, is characteristic of many Greek and Roman monsters,[9] and was virtually inherent in the image of the octopus: in popular thought, the octopus oscillated between being and not being classified as a fish;[10] Aelian himself calls the octopus a fish (*ikhthus*) too.

This particular octopus is also described as having "an arrogant body mass"; the "arrogance" of its bulk is further underlined by the arrogance of its despise and disdain for the food from the sea and its pasture. Moreover, this arrogance forces it to leave its natural habitat, the sea, for dry land, and spurs it to become a thief. Hence the octopus transgresses several other boundaries as well, both natural and moral: between land and sea, animal food and human food, honest creatures and thieves.

The setting of the story is far from coincidental. Puteoli in the south of Italy (present-day Pozzuoli in Campania) was founded as a Greek colony, Dicaearchia, in the sixth century BC, and was conquered by the Romans in 194 BC. It was one of Roman Italy's principal ports, the most important one before the construction of the harbour in Ostia in Claudian times (which started in AD 42) and only second to Ostia thereafter,[11] as well as a lively centre of commerce, particularly in luxury items from the east.[12] Therefore, the city was known for the presence of many foreign residents, which made it a plausible setting for this story.[13] For Aelian's readers, Puteoli possessed an air of the familiarly exotic: on the one hand, it was populated by traders from distant regions, with different languages being spoken in the street, yet on the other constituting the common playground of the Roman elite, the members of which owned large estates and had other financial interests in the region.[14]

The commercial centre of Puteoli was located by the sea, in the splendid two-storied building of the indoor market (Latin *Macellum*).[15] There were warehouses on all sides, stretching along the entire port area,[16] and it is in one of these the merchants store their cargo. The "stout vessels" in which the fish was stored were probably amphorae, which was a common means of transporting and storing this type of produce,[17] and Aelian states they were made of clay (*keramos*). Crushing the vessels by squeezing them would have required considerable strength, and it is no mean feat the octopus performs in the story; later on, the octopus is likened to a prize fighter (*athlêtê*) taking a stranglehold on his antagonist. Aelian is probably thinking of an athlete competing in the *pankration*, which was a violent sport combining wrestling and boxing, where strangleholds were permitted and commonly used.[18]

The victims of the depredations of the octopus, the Iberian merchants selling *tarikhos*, serve to reinforce the story's plausibility further. *Tarikhos* was a word most frequently used for salted fish,[19] and Spain was one of the main exporters of such fish products, as well as of the more high-quality fish sauce, *garum*.[20] In a study of the social status of Iberian merchants of fish products, based on the names in inscriptions on preserved amphorae, most of them were of freedman status, and some were freeborn or slaves.[21] Even though this lower social status did not necessarily translate into being poor in ancient Rome, it is nevertheless likely that the loss of the salted fish was a very real one for the merchants in the story; their livelihood is directly threatened by the incursions of the octopus. This is later corroborated in the text by the expression: "then some remembered the greatness of their losses".

To prevent further losses, the merchants decide to post a guard, their most courageous servant, but he is too overwhelmed by the monstrosity of the octopus to take it on by himself. The spectacle of destruction is fully visible in the light of the full moon, and it is here that Aelian inserts his description of the octopus as a pankratiast. Since facing this monstrous animal athlete is a task requiring a whole troop, that is what the merchants go on to assemble. They are like soldiers going off to war: they "arm themselves against the enemy" (*hôplizonto epi ton polemion*), but given the curious anatomy of their enemy, they do not approach it as they would a human antagonist, but as a vine-dresser or woodcutters with a sharp sickle would cut off the shoots of an oak.[22]

This metaphorical assimilation of the octopus and a military enemy on the one hand, and the octopus and a tree on the other, may serve to legitimise the extreme violence involved in killing it. According to Roman views, an enemy either had to be killed or captured and enslaved,[23] and in this case, capturing it is not an option; the risk of its running rampant again is too great. However, victory does not come easily; the merchants have to expend immense effort in defeating their enemy.

Likening the octopus to a robber (*lêistês*) and a thief (*phôr*) serves to further legitimise the violent treatment of the intruder, as it was fully lawful to kill a thief in the night. This old provision from the *Law of the Twelve Tables*, the first extant Roman law dating to 451/450 BC, survived well into the Imperial period, making it socially acceptable to punish theft with death; a human thief too could have received this punishment.[24] To a Roman audience, some wicked sense of satisfaction may have been derived from the fact that Iberian merchants are the ones to be so heavily despoiled; "Iberian" was a by-word for thief – Virgil (70–19 BC), for example, uses the word as a synonym for a cattle-thief[25] – and to see the Iberians as victims of the kind of

depredations they would "normally" inflict on others might have appeared as a form of poetic justice.[26]

10.2 The Octopus Climbing the Tree

The second variant of this ancient legend is to be found in Pliny the Elder's (AD 23/24–79) *Natural History*, and here the focus is on the site of production rather than the site of commerce:

> In the fishponds[27] at Carteia, [an octopus] used to emerge from the sea, going to the open basins, and plunder the salted fish there. (All marine animals are marvelously fond of this odour and therefore it is also smeared onto fish traps.) Thus, it attracted the indignation of the guards, which was beyond measure because of the frequent recurrence of the theft. Fences were set up, but it climbed over these by means of a tree, and would not have been caught without the dogs' keenness of scent. When it was returning at night, the dogs attacked it on every side. The guards, who were roused [by the din], were greatly terrified by its unusualness: first of all, its size was unheard of, as was its colour; it was besmeared with brine; and had an awful smell. Who would have expected an octopus there or recognised it under such circumstances? It seemed to them that they were fighting a monster, for with its horrible breath it tormented the dogs, which it now lashed with the ends of its feelers, now struck with its stronger arms in the manner of clubs, and it could scarcely be killed with many tridents.[28]

Carteia in southern Spain was a prominent producer of salted fish, and elsewhere Pliny the Elder himself tells us it was particularly famous for its *garum*.[29] Archaeological excavations on the site have uncovered well-preserved salting basins of the kind referred to in the story,[30] and the setting is therefore a highly plausible one. To increase the credibility of the story further, Pliny the Elder mentions that he owes it to one Trebius Niger, who was a member of the Roman proconsul's retinue in the province of Hispania Baetica; thus, the information derives from a person with local knowledge, who was, implicitly, present when the remains of the octopus were shown before the Roman official.

Pliny the Elder proceeds to state that the smell of salted fish is tantalising for all marine animals, and therefore it is employed in fishing to lure them into traps. The reaction of the octopus is thus presented as perfectly understandable, even as something we should expect: it is natural for the octopus to crave this kind of food. In this respect, Pliny the Elder differs from Aelian, who seems to have regarded this penchant for salted fish as quite perverse.

The guards are enraged by the thefts, and respond by erecting fences, but to no avail; the octopus simply climbs a tree instead. This ability of the octopus to move on land is remarked upon in several ancient sources; especially coastal vineyards and fruit trees are singled out as favoured targets. Aelian also mentions this in another passage on the depredations of octopuses: in summer, farmers have often found octopuses climbing the trunks of fruit trees and picking the fruit;[31] when they are discovered, the farmers catch them and cook them in revenge.[32]

The ones to detect the octopus are the astute guard dogs that have been posted to protect the plant from intrusion. They are described in terms suggesting they are ideal guard dogs: their barks are loud enough to wake the human guards; they are extremely loyal; unflinching in their duties; and merciless avengers of any wrongs committed against their masters.[33] The guards are frightened by the monstrosity of the octopus; both its unnatural size and awful smell makes it almost impossible to categorise and recognise as an octopus, once again pointing to its ontological liminality.[34]

When the guards and dogs launch a concerted attack on the octopus, "it seemed to them that they were fighting a monster". The scene is vividly described, and has a certain air of a fight in the arena, except for the fact that gladiators generally fought in single combat and not in groups; this would be the hallmark of Roman soldiers.[35] Despite their fear, the men resolutely enter the fray, armed with tridents. In the gladiatorial games, the trident was a weapon associated with the *retiarius*, who used it in addition to the net that gave him his name (Latin *rete* means net). The dogs which have to take the brunt of the octopus' abuse, however, being lashed by its whip-like feelers and struck by its club-like arms, would hardly be consoled by the fact that the gladiators it resembles, the *paegnarii* – who carried clubs – were comic figures generally despised by "real gladiators".[36] Here, there is nothing comic about the monstrous octopus and the threat it poses to the lives and limbs of both dogs and men. For the audience of the story, the incongruity of the images of the fearsome octopus and the ridiculous *paegnarius* may have afforded some mirth.

10.3 The Octopus: A Symbol of Intelligence, Deceit and Stupidity

In ancient thought, the octopus was perceived as a liminal, or perhaps rather an ambivalent creature,[37] as it did not only occupy a space on the boundary between cultural categories, but belonged to two categories simultaneously:

on the one hand, it was a marine animal living in the sea, and on the other, it could go onto land and even climb trees.[38] This indeterminacy is cleverly exploited in both Aelian's and Pliny the Elder's stories, and draws on general conceptions of the octopus current in Graeco-Roman culture.

As Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant have pointed out, the octopus was a symbol of intelligence and craft in the ancient world.[39] Its ability to change colour to conform to that of its surroundings was viewed as a result of its cunning – the change is not occasioned by emotions but by conscious action[40] – yet it was also regarded as a sign of its timorousness.[41] The intelligence of the octopus, represented by its twisting arms, even served as a model for human cleverness of a particularly complex and intricate kind (*poluplokon noêma*),[42] primarily associated with sophists and politicians who deployed it each in their different, and equally twisted, ways.[43]

Elsewhere in his work, Aelian glosses the peculiar capacity of changing colour as a two-way ruse: it is utilised both to save the octopus itself from the evil designs of other animals, and to allow it to ambush its own prey.[44] In yet another passage, Aelian describes the octopus as greedy and constantly plotting some evil;[45] the present story could perhaps be construed as an example demonstrating these very traits. Towards the end of the story, Aelian also gives an evaluation of the moral character of the octopus: it is mischievous (*kakourgos*) and deceitful (*doleros*).

In spite of its repute as an intelligent animal, the octopus was also regarded as stupid.[46] The prime evidence for this was considered to be its gullibility in swimming towards a hand submerged in water, as this hand was most likely intending to catch it and kill it, and its reluctance to escape when it was being pursued by an enemy. In a passage just preceding Pliny the Elder's marvellous story, in which he discusses the octopuses' technique in hunting shell-fish – by wedging their shells open with a stone – he ends it by stating: "even the most obtuse of animals possesses such great ingenuity".[47] The Greek comic poet Alcaeus (fourth century BC) equated being foolish with having the mind of an octopus.[48]

The physical attributes of the octopus were fearsome and perplexing; its tentacles were the most fear-inspiring, as also evinced in Pliny the Elder. He states that octopuses swallowed shipwrecked sailors and divers, tearing them apart with their powerful suckers.[49] In Aelian, we find several stories from the animal realm exhibiting the power of the octopus' tentacles: in one of them, the octopus is attacked by an eagle, which intends to feed itself and its young on it, but instead finds itself dragged down as the octopus throws its tentacles around it.[50] Moreover, the whole body of the octopus was a contradiction in terms, with its many fluidly flexible tentacles and nearly identical front

and back. When it is swimming, the eyes look forward, while the mouth is positioned in the rear.[51]

According to Detienne and Vernant, the octopus was seen as a nocturnal creature, one that could, significantly, create its own darkness by ejecting ink, both to escape from its enemies and to catch its prey.[52] In this respect, this peculiar capacity was perceived to function in a way similar to the ability to change colour. Some authorities, such as Aristotle (384–322 BC), denied that the octopus discharged its ink for other reasons than being frightened, reserving the more scheming use for the cuttlefish.[53] Being a species of marine animal, some would argue that the octopus too was quite devoid of grace, lacking in natural affection, and without a share in sweetness of temper.[54] In the winter, the octopus was believed to eat itself, as it was slothful, insensate or gluttunous, or all of these things at once.[55] Aelian mentions this curious habit as well, with the addition that the missing limb is later regenerated, and describes it as a ready meal during famine.[56]

In the world of dream interpretation, the octopus was auspicious for only one group in human society: criminals. Once again, it is the ability to change colour and blend into the surroundings that is proffered as an argument for this position, and obviously such a talent would be beneficial for criminals as well. For other people, dreaming of octopuses signifies obstacles and delays; here the ability to grasp onto objects and the viscosity of the octopus are taken as symbols of this obstructing force. For persons engaged in trade, the dreams indicated a slack in business, as the boneless octopus does not possess sufficient strength of body to symbolise the opposite.[57] It is explicitly the lack of bones that endows it with this symbolic meaning, as few seem to dispute the physical power of the octopus.

10.4 An Orca in Ostia: Claudius and the Killer Whale

The stories about the giant octopus have a parallel[58] in another anecdote in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, about the Roman Emperor Claudius (reigned AD 41–54) and a killer whale[59] in the harbour of Ostia:

> A killer whale has been spotted too in the port of Ostia, and was attacked by the Emperor Claudius. It came when he was finishing the construction of the harbour, attracted by the shipwreck of hides arriving from Gaul. Sating itself for several days, it had furrowed a hollow in the shallow bottom [of the boat], and was buried so deeply in sand carried there by the waves that it could not turn around by any means. While it was pursuing its food, which was driven forward by the waves towards the shore, its back projected high

> above the water like an inverted boat. Caesar ordered many hunting-nets to be stretched out across the mouth of the harbour, and himself advancing with the Praetorian cohorts, he furnished the Roman people with a show. The soldiery threw spears, attacking from the boats, and one of these [boats] we saw sinking, filling up with water due to the contrary wind [created by] a monster.[60]

There are a number of parallels between the stories. The octopus and the killer whale alike are creatures of nature that have breached a barrier: the barrier between the natural world and the world of men. Like the lazy octopus gorging on salted fish in the harbour town of Dicaearchia discussed above, the gluttonous killer whale has absconded his natural habitat in order to come into the harbour of Ostia, lured into its shallow waters by the possibility to devour raw hides from a sunken ship. For both the octopus and the killer whale appear to prefer goods of trade, salted fish from Hispania and raw hides from Gaul, respectively, to their natural food.

In Roman antiquity, the killer whale was considered a particularly ferocious – indeed fear-evoking – creature, lethal to animals and men alike.[61] Yet this anecdote tells that the emperor himself, Claudius, braved this danger and accompanied the Praetorian guard in their boats out into the harbour to defeat the deadly creature.[62] The Praetorian guard was an elite military unit based in the capital of Rome, functioning as a form of body guard of the emperor.[63] In the preceding passage, Pliny the Elder likens the killer whale with a battle ship which charges and rams vulnerable whales (calving females and their young offspring), and the emperor battles it (*est oppugnata a Claudio principe*).[64] The scene is one of courage, and although the word is not used, it is clearly an example of *virtus*. For it was relatively rare for generals – or indeed the emperor himself – to be on the frontline fighting the enemy.[65] This is yet another parallel between the stories: the frightfulness of the creature, and the courage of those who fought it.

This story too appeals to the imagery of the arena: Pliny the Elder writes that Claudius and the Praetorian guard "furnished the Roman people with a show" (*spectaculum*). The staged naval battle (*naumachia*) was a more unusual form of spectacle; the first known instance was Julius Caesar's representation of a battle between the Egyptians and the Phoenicians in a basin built for the purpose in Rome (in 46 BC). After him, several others followed suit, such as Sextus Pompey in 40 BC, Agrippa in 19 BC and Augustus in 2 BC.[66] Claudius attempted to stage one as well to mark the commencement of his effort to drain the Fucine Lake in AD 52, but it failed rather dismally. The combatants who fill the boats were convicts,[67] and Claudius made the mistake of intimating that the combatants might not actually have to die while participating in the show,

which they considered indicative of being pardoned, and therefore refused to fight. In Suetonius' (b. *c.* AD 70) account, Claudius then had to disgrace himself by tottering about along the circumference of the lake, alternately threatening and exhorting them to combat.[68] Claudius clearly gets his revenge as a successful sponsor of naval battles in Pliny the Elder's story of the killer whale, even though the combatants who then fill the boats are real soldiers.

There could, however, hardly be a more unlikely hero than the emperor Claudius. Suetonius has described Claudius in the following manner:

> … for nearly the entire duration of his childhood and youth, he was afflicted by various tenacious diseases to such a point that both his mind and body were dulled. Not even when he had advanced in age was he considered fit for any public or private function.[69]

And Dio Cassius (*c.* AD 164–after 229) describes him as anything but a hero:

> Besides, he possessed cowardice, because of which he was often so terror-struck that he could not duly consider anything.[70]

While it may be unexpected for a person of Claudius' character and physique to join the struggle against this deadly creature,[71] there was a close association between Ostia and Claudius in the Roman mind. Claudius was the first to construct a proper harbour with piers and a lighthouse in Ostia – or rather at Portus – somewhat north of the original inlet to the Tiber at Ostia.[72] The strong reaction to these creatures lies not only in the fact that they are dangerous, indeed deadly, intruders, which evoked a deeply felt fear; what is more, these events supposedly happened in the heartlands of the Roman empire.

10.5 Fear, Courage, Disgust and Arrogance

Fear is an emotion explicitly expressed by the characters in both octopus stories. The solitary servant in Aelian, selected as the most courageous (*ton malista eutolmotaton*), refrains from attacking it single-handedly, "as he was afraid of the beast" (*deisas ton thêra*). In Pliny the Elder, the guards are greatly terrified by the unusualness of the sight (*expavere novitatem*). The story of the killer whale is markedly different in this respect, as no overt mention is made of any fear on the part of the characters. This might be due to the fact that the defenders in the first two cases are laymen, whereas they are professional soldiers in the last, and they could thus be expected to be courageous in the face of danger.

In Aelian, there is no hint of the servant being regarded as cowardly, and the same appears to apply to Pliny the Elder's octopus story. Since Aristotle's

notion of fear is most commensurate with this view – it is often more in tune with popular conceptions of emotions, as mentioned in Chapter 4 – it will be used here to elucidate the implications of the stories. According to Aristotle, we feel fear in the face of a superior opponent; this requires judgements concerning the relative strengths of oneself and one's adversary. Feeling fear in such circumstances is only natural, and there is no stigma attached to it; rather, failing to fear is seen as deviant, the mark of a madman or insensate person.[73]

Fear also induces people to deliberate, speeding up their thought processes as they contemplate different courses of action.[74] The methodical procedure of the defenders in Aelian – some blocking up the conduit, others arming themselves against the enemy, and cutting through the tentacles with choppers and sharpened razors – is the result of a process of deliberation, planning and executing the optimal strategy for defeating the octopus.

Fear and courage may be seen as interrelated in so far as courage is a disposition particularly geared to fearful things, and therefore by extension to the emotion of fear. In Aristotle's scheme of things, courage (*andreia*) is the virtuous mean located between the extremes of rashness (*thrasus*) and cowardice (*deilia*). As courage does not only involve fear, however, but also its opposite, confidence (*tharros*), between which it is a mean, some scholars have found Aristotle's account of courage inconsistent or even faulty; it seems to place a single virtue on at least two different scales which are incompatible.[75]

Setting these tangled philosophical issues aside for our present purposes, Aristotle's discussion on courage has the merit of expressing a conception of it akin to that implicit in our stories. Aristotle is quite adamant on the point that courage *as a virtue* cannot be the result of mere self-control.[76] The virtuously courageous man is not fearless in the sense of being ignorant of – or insensitive to – danger, as the man suffering from fearlessness (*aphobia*); he is well aware of the risks, but still stands firm in the knowledge of performing a noble deed.[77]

In the stories, the goal of defeating the errant animals is considered paramount to the dangers involved in attacking them. Since this goal overrides the fear of death and injury, the attackers do not have to exercise self-control: self-control was, according to Aristotle, desiring to embark on a bad course of action – like running away – but willing oneself to do good contrary to one's inclinations; there is an element of internal conflict that is absent in the virtuous man.[78]

The case of the Praetorian guard might be different, though, for Aristotle says that the valour exhibited by soldiers tends to be due to their experience and expertise in matters of warfare, which he distinguishes from true courage:

they are able to correctly assess the risks, and can readily perceive when the risk is not so very great.[79] As Roman soldiers, they would also be constrained by the ideal of *virtus* "manly courage" (Latin *virtus* derives from *vir* "man" just as Greek *andreia* "courage" derives from *aner* "man").

Similarly to Aristotle, Roman *virtus* was neither an emotion nor morally neutral. It represented the highest standard of manliness, and could be seen to possess two distinct components: one aggressive, attributed to men storming a city or conquering an enemy in single combat, and one more passive and enduring, implying steadfastness in moments of danger. The aggressive quality is more uniformly given the label *virtus*, whereas the passive one did not necessarily receive this characterisation.[80]

The emotion of disgust (*fastidium*) seems to be elicited in two principal contexts in the stories. The first is associated with the manner of entrance into the city in Aelian's account, namely through the sewers. This disgust is largely implicit, and has to be reconstructed through an intertextual reading of passages on sewers and sewage in the works of authors of the Roman period. Attitudes to sewers were ambivalent at best.[81] On the one hand, sewers were represented as one of the peaks of Roman civilisation, along with the roads and aqueducts, and furnished a source of immense pride.[82] Some went so far as to compare Rome to the hanging cities (*urbes pensiles*) of Babylon and Thebes (Egypt), as Rome "hung above" the torrents of its astounding sewer system that could even be travelled on by boat. Roman greatness was perceived to rest on its sewers, and these constituted incontrovertible monuments to her glory.[83] Pliny the Elder is quite eloquent on this point:

> … sometimes the Tiber is carried back, pouring backward into [the sewers], and the force of the water struggles within them in different directions, and yet their strength firmly resists. Even though such heavy loads are being hauled above them; buildings tumble down headlong of their own accord or dash against them during a fire and batter them, the hollow constructions do not fall down. The ground is shaken by earthquakes, yet from the time of Tarquinius Priscus, they have remained virtually impregnable for 700 years.[84]

On the other hand, sewers were still disgusting despite this public elevation. According to a Roman proverb, "turning a sewer into a triumphal arch" (*arcum facere ex cloaca*), is not an easy task,[85] and the Romans did not wholly succeed in this endeavour either; drains and sewers were inextricably associated with the disgusting,[86] although they – objectively speaking – should have been less so than nowadays, as they were chiefly designed for draining off ground and rainwater and not for transporting waste and filth away.[87]

The second context is present in both stories and is less implicit. The emotion of disgust seems to be particularly tied to the body, and to

contamination of its boundaries.[88] The mouth is perceived as especially vulnerable, as "you are what you eat".[89] In Aelian's and Pliny the Elder's stories, the octopus is virtually wallowing in what is destined to become human food, contaminating the unwitting human consumers of the pickled fish. Accordingly, the octopus could in this instance be construed as dangerous due to its "powers to contaminate, infect, or pollute by proximity, contact, or ingestion".[90]

For the audiences of the stories, the feelings of disgust evoked by this implication were likely to be exacerbated if they themselves had consumed this type of food: what if I have unwittingly ingested polluted salted fish? The mere thought is revolting.[91] As the stories are presented as entirely plausible and trustworthy accounts, it is conceivable that the sense of panic usually attending our awareness of being defiled by disgusting things[92] is being toyed with. What is more, this defilement has the unpleasant corollary of making us, by the process of contagion, seem equally disgusting.[93]

These rather visceral incentives to disgust conform to one of the two major disgust scripts in Roman culture: the "per se reflex" that is an almost automatic response to classes of stimuli deemed revolting, in contrast to the "deliberative ranking" through which we construct hierarchies of taste.[94] Sometimes one can be used to flesh out the other; in the case of sewers, a deliberative ranking of people could be achieved by appealing to labels normally attached to a per se reflex, such as "cloacal sewage" (*faeculentiae … par cloacali*) as an epithet for less sophisticated individuals.[95]

Implicitly, the octopus too experiences disgust, not of the per se variety, but of the ranking one: it appears to conceive *fastidium* for its natural food, as it deliberately prefers the human product of salted fish. The same would apply to the killer whale and its predilection for hides. Since ranking disgust is always an activity embedded in a particular cultural context, it tends to be represented as "deviations from or corruptions of 'natural' appetite" or "pathologies of consumption",[96] which is certainly the case here, with the partial exception of Pliny the Elder's octopus story in which this trend is not so strong.

This type of disgust is often, overtly or covertly, associated with derision and contempt,[97] and in Aelian's story, this is properly spelled out, as the octopus starts to "despise and disdain the food from the sea". Yet the food it spurns, fresh crabs, shrimp, scallops and fish, would normally be more prized by a Roman than the cheap salted fish;[98] in this respect its taste is quite perverse. Even though there were some excessively refined diners who would reputedly reject fresh fish on the grounds that it was not novel or even fresh

enough unless the fish died before their eyes,[99] none would deign to replace it with paltry salted fish.

From the point of view of the octopus, of course, the salted fish *is* a novelty, one not easily obtained in the sea. By succumbing to the pleasure of eating salted fish, and simultaneously discarding the food that is readily available, it falls victim to the vice of *luxus*, one generally condemned by Roman moralists.[100] As food was indeed one of the main areas in which *luxus* was considered to manifest itself,[101] it is not surprising that the food habits of the octopus are singled out for criticism. The real danger of such luxury-loving disgust, however, if Seneca the Younger is to be believed, is that everything will eventually be encompassed by this all-consuming disgust, leaving only *fastidium* for the world and life itself.[102]

Significantly, the representation of the ranking *fastidium* of the octopus conforms to the common pattern in such cases, namely that it is a practice ascribed to others: few wish to confess their own transgressions in this regard.[103] However, through the very act of deploring this ranking *fastidium* on the part of the octopus, as the author and audience might well do, the octopus itself furtively becomes the object of this self-same ranking *fastidium*: we are better than it, because we ostensibly do not indulge in such deliberative ranking of food, moderate and decent people as we are.

As Robert Kaster has shown, we can thereby enjoy a complacent sense of superiority, without sticking our necks out and risking the charge of engaging in boasting (*iactatio*), another much-deplored vice in Roman culture.[104] Importune self-aggrandizement, as ranking disgust always implies, can be concealed on our own part beneath a veneer of righteous indignation (*invidia*), which is the appropriate response to any act by another failing to comply with the norms of our shared way of life.[105] Since ranking disgust entails a wish to rise above this shared way of life, it is also a rejection of the social in favour of the individual, and thus cannot conform to the norms of proper comportment, embodied in the emotion of shame (*pudor*) in the Roman mind.[106]

At the very beginning of Aelian's story, he describes the octopus as having an *onkon sômatos huperêphanon*, literally an "arrogant body mass". This expression has seemed so odd to most translators that is seldom rendered into English in this way, but we believe that this peculiar phrase indicates an important aspect of the narrative: the perceived arrogance (*huperêphania*) of the octopus. Arrogance is usually classified as a vice rather than an emotion, and it is viewed as a disposition (*diathesis*)[107] and thus a more or less permanent trait unless treated through therapy. The principal feature related to arrogance, which is seen to underlie it, is a sense of superiority, often coupled with being contemptuous (*kataphronêtikos*) and insolent (*hubristês*) to others.[108]

Though many of the finer points of ancient philosophical delineations of the social repercussions of this vice are difficult to apply to the octopus, bestial as it is in mindset, the more general ones do possess some pertinence in this case as well. Sometimes, this very animal nature can be recruited for the purpose of casting their disastrous effects in particularly high relief; i.e., the octopus can be understood as a symbol of human behaviour and demeanour.

The octopus and the arrogant man both share a sense of entitlement to their good fortune: the arrogant man thinks his good fortune and any service he might be rendered by others are merely his due, as he is so superior to others,[109] while the octopus never doubts its right to pilfer salted fish and thus deprive others of their belongings. Anything else is hardly to be expected of a brute animal, but if we take it as a symbol of a human character, the octopus articulates the deeply inconsiderate nature of the arrogant person. Not surprisingly, the arrogant man and the octopus are both treated harshly on this account, as their offensive behaviour angers others, making them rejoice at, and do their best to contribute to, their downfall.[110] Nevertheless, the ruthlessness of the octopus is also related to another aspect of the manner in which it is represented: its characterisation as an unbridled glutton, or "mad-belly" (*gastrimargos*).

10.6 Being a Slave under Pleasure

The octopuses in the stories are clearly slaves under their desire for salted fish, as is the killer whale in its craving for raw hides. An explicit link between octopuses and desire is occasionally attested in the ancient sources, but then it is being eaten by humans; in Diocles of Carystus' *Hygiene*, a Greek medical work of disputed date but perhaps roughly contemporary with Aristotle (384–322 BC), consumption of molluscs – and particularly octopuses – incites to pleasure and lust.[111] Similarly, Philo of Alexandria (fl. first century AD), in attempting to explain the rationale behind the provisions of kosher rules in the Leviticus, discusses the injunction that people must abstain from consuming the flesh of such aquatic animals as are scaleless – which includes the octopus – as this flesh is the fattest and hence the most titillating for that most slavish of senses: taste. Enjoying these delicacies engenders gluttony, an evil for soul and body that is hard to heal,[112] and thus is best avoided by exercising self-control.

Transferring the pleasure aroused by consuming the animal to the character of the octopus itself, turning it into an intensely pleasure-seeking creature, we get a description of someone afflicted by an intemperate

disposition (*akolasia*) that could almost be directly modelled on Aristotle's description in the third book of his *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is typical for the intemperate to focus on the pleasures of the senses and the body, and of taste and tactile sensations in particular. A mere whiff of the food they desire can transport them into ecstasy, as it reminds them of what they crave;[113] this is a trait shared with the octopus in Pliny the Elder's story: note that he appeals to the odour of the salted fish as a manner of catching sea creatures.

Consequently, the virtue of temperance (*sôphrosunê*) and the corresponding vice of intemperance deal with the pleasures common to both animals and man, which makes them intrinsically slavish (*andrapodôdeis*) and beast-like (*thêriôdêis*). Finding pleasure in such things and loving them excessively does not become a man but is rather the preserve of animals:[114] for the human audience hearing the story, being like the profligate octopus is to be considered profoundly shameful. It is the mark of an exceedingly slavish nature to succumb to this vice, and it results in an overshadowing desire to pursue these pleasures, which are chosen above all else.[115]

Aristotle viewed intemperance as a voluntary vice, even more so than cowardice, as the one is concerned with pleasant things, the other with terrible or unbearable ones which can utterly destroy one's character.[116] The problem with the vice of intemperance is that it is very difficult to cure – Aristotle even claims it is incurable – as intemperance is in essence a reasoned disposition to overly privilege bodily pleasures, and to feel no repentance for this fact.[117] Hence this vice is unremitting, and the sufferer unaware of his sorry condition. Incidentally, the same has been said of arrogance; it is exceedingly hard to cure, as the lack of self-awareness greatly obstructs any therapeutic efforts.[118]

Part of Philodemus of Gadara's (*c*. 110–*c*. 40/35 BC) treatise on arrogance is a summary of a work by the philosopher Ariston, who was either the Peripatetic philosopher Ariston of Ceos (fl. *c*. 225 BC), or the Stoic Ariston of Chios (fl. mid-third century BC).[119] He proposed a series of therapeutic strategies to remove arrogance.[120] One was to collect examples of how prominent men comported themselves in simple, humane and compassionate ways rather than with arrogance.[121] Another followed the opposite trajectory, by collecting negative examples of people who behaved arrogantly and had to suffer for it.[122] Perhaps our stories could be employed for a similar purpose, to demonstrate the destructive power of the vice of intemperance. If we believe Aristotle and do posit that intemperance is indeed incurable, we can deploy the figures of the octopus and the killer whale as deterring examples for those of us who are not intemperate but rather weak of will (*akratic*) and sometimes do things against our better judgement.

The concept of *akrasia* "weakness of will" is a difficult one, as it has been the object of considerable debate both in antiquity and in modern times.[123] Plato (*c*. 429–347 BC) seems to make the earliest mention of the concept in the *Protagoras*, where Socrates (469–399 BC) rejects the very notion of *akrasia*, stressing that it is impossible for human beings to truly act against their innermost convictions, choosing a lesser option over and against the one they regard as supremely good, as the concept implies.[124] Aristotle, who was generally more sympathetic to lay meanings and uses of philosophical terms, assumed that *akrasia* did exist, and attempted to explain the paradoxes inherent in the concept. Since he was not entirely consistent in his evaluation of different explanatory models, however, this has allowed for both intellectualist and non-intellectualist interpretations of his version of *akrasia*.[125]

For our present purposes, the view that *akrasia* is the result of our desires (*epithumia*) carrying us away[126] would seem to conform more closely to the situation portrayed in the narrative, which emphasises the impact of appetitive desire on the octopus' behaviour. Unfortunately, Aristotle does not give any detailed outline of a potential therapy for this condition, but elsewhere he states, as a general rule of thumb, that we should observe our own propensities very closely, judging their impact by the pleasure or pain we experience, and attempt to move towards the opposite extreme. This would make it easier for us to hit the mean.[127]

This brief comment aligns well with an insight gained in modern interpretations of *akrasia*, namely that a therapy for it should address the issue of the "origins of these desires" and be the result of reflection on "the conditions that prompt the syndrome of [the] ailments".[128] These are frequently socio-cultural; indeed, seemingly akratic actions might be implicitly supported and encouraged by the culture.[129] Being a glutton was perhaps despised as a manifestation of bad character, but it was also a practice supported by other social norms, such as the lure of submitting to conspicuous consumption as a method for boosting social prestige in certain circles.[130] Aristotle's recipe for changing this state of affairs would probably have been political, as he generally favoured political solutions to various problems.[131]

Identifying the problem as social in this manner paves the way for a more deliberate and potentially critical relationship to prevalent social norms, as suggested in narrative therapy.[132] In the modern Western world, the internalisation of problems – which is a result of the impact of psychoanalysis on our modes of thought – has been identified as a serious drawback in attempts to cope with various difficulties in life, as it entails the supposition that our shortcomings are entirely our own "fault", and that they are, by implication, nearly inescapable. However, by delving into the social history

of our seemingly idiosyncratic inadequacies, and tracing their influence in the wider social context that surrounds us, we can see that they are, indeed, cultural constructions: perhaps difficult to alter in any decisive manner, but not immutable per se.

Even though this modern underpinning of psychological internalisation did not occur in this form in the ancient world,[133] the emphasis on choice, and man's responsibility for the choices he makes, also places the moral burden on the individual to a large extent.[134] Within the field of philosophy, this trend was further accentuated with time, as Stoic views, privileging assent as the central human faculty, gained in importance. In Roman society, members of the elite habitually ascribed what we would regard today as political problems to moral weakness, or more precisely, to the lack of self-control of individuals.[135]

As the ideology of self-control serves to occlude sociopolitical pressures on the individual, assigning problems to the sphere of the individual's strength of will or lack thereof, modern narrative therapy also gives us a hint as to why Aristotle might be correct in insisting on the achievement of real virtue – characterised by the absence of internal contradictions between different desires and values – and not contenting ourselves with the lesser substitute of self-control. At first glance, Aristotle's description of the virtuous person appears utopian – what normal person is not torn between conflicting desires sometimes? – but he is quite accurate in observing that self-control can be part of the problem.

Narrative therapists who have worked with clients with eating disorders, the closest modern equivalent to our ancient gluttons, have noted that the desire for self-control is a symptom of a sense of lack of control over one's life.[136] In the modern case, self-control forms part of the ideal of self-regulation, of being a "docile body" in Michel Foucault's sense;[137] when self-regulation does not succeed, our dominant discourses of this being due to personal failure exacerbates the situation, and leads to an ever-increasing intensification of self-surveillance. Since self-control functions as a substitute for taking active and effective action in the outside world, which could allow for real political change and a reformation of destructive social expectations – something Aristotle would have condoned – the energy is turned inward, and the problem is, once again, internalised.[138]

The aim of therapy is, firstly, to recognise the nature of this self-control as a coping strategy, and to acknowledge the need of the coping strategy;[139] eating disorders do make sense in people's lives, though it is not the most advantageous mode of sense making. Secondly, we should not listen merely to the surface stories of being fat or losing control over the desire for food, but to the suppressed narratives of how people use their bodies to articulate their

"struggles of self in the world". Eventually, this will facilitate an understanding of the meaning of these struggles in one's life. Moreover, narrative therapy also teaches us that despite the apparent harm caused by behaviours we typically regard as destructive, some of them do have positive features that it would be imprudent to purge out completely.[140] Nonetheless, it might be imperative to reroute these, channeling them into a more productive form.

We do not intend to suggest that gluttony in the Roman world was an eating disorder in any modern sense. The parallel is instructive, however, as it sheds light on the ramifications of notions of self-control and the lack of it in the context of food and eating habits. As Emily Gowers has observed, literary depictions of people relishing food tend to be confined to particular types of persons: children and slaves – who were not held entirely responsible for their own conduct – parasites, cooks, gluttons and gourmets.[141] The glutton's body was marked by *luxuria*; it was "swollen" (*luxuriasset*) and "spilled over" (*exuberasset*), as Aulus Gellius says of a Roman knight deprived of his horse for his obesity.[142] The octopus in Aelian's story explicitly conforms to this description, with its "arrogant body mass". Such a body was not fit for service to the state, and was thus reprehensible in Roman eyes.[143] The equilibrium of the body was disturbed when the head ceased to rule over desire and abdicated to the stomach.[144]

The problem was that it was not only individual Romans who suffered from this vice; the whole of Roman society was affected by this malaise, if Roman moralists are to be believed. With the Roman conquest of the arch-enemy Carthage and of Greece in 146 BC, the *luxuria* of the state was beginning to be rife.[145] As in the modern world, the self-restraint of the individual compensated for the failures of society, in this case the alleged luxury of the state, and this tendency becomes more pronounced the more political freedom is constrained in the conversion of the Republic into the Principate.[146]

So what should the Roman glutton do to escape his deplorable condition? One therapy that could be proposed is the following, which is inspired by Epictetus' (*c.* AD 50–125) Stoic therapy for *akrasia*, the very existence of which he denies,[147] and narrative therapy. Epictetus' therapy circumvents the issue of self-control and its potentially ruinous effects by insisting on a reflective orientation to our impressions and the courses of action they suggest to us, the assumption being that we accept such impressions as true that are consistent with our interests.[148] When we make the "wrong" moral decision, we privilege the wrong interest because it seems the best for us, however deluded it appears to others.

Epictetus recommends detaching ourselves from our impressions, and outlines two different strategies for doing so.[149] The first is to stop ourselves from immediately assenting to the truth of an impression by engaging in an internal conversation with it: "Wait for me a little, impression. Let me see what you are and what you are about; let me put you to the test".[150] Since impressions of wicked actions tend to present themselves as pleasurable and appealing to our minds, opposing them to the image of a fair and noble action will induce us to choose this better alternative. The second strategy, which is particularly useful with something pleasurable, is to compare the brief duration of the pleasure to the long duration of its aftermath, not forgetting the sense of self-revulsion we might experience afterwards.[151]

In narrative therapy, revising one's relationship to the problem is a standard technique for gaining new perspectives on a problem. It is commonly framed as a refusal to continue to cooperate with the requirements of the problem, i.e., the life-support system of unreflected habits and beliefs that sustains it.[152] Identifying these requirements is the first step, followed by the development of strategies to undermine them. Generally, people unwittingly collude in the reproduction of the problem, and understanding what it feeds on is key to circumscribing its influence on one's life. Ceasing to comply with the notion that gluttony is necessarily a symptom of individual weakness, and recognising it as a strategy for acquiring social prestige allows for making a more informed choice between the exigencies of interpersonal jockeying for position and the potential satisfaction of more moderate food habits.

If our Roman glutton resembled his peers, an unpleasant consequence of his vice would be the vomiting he would voluntarily induce in order to be able to enjoy even more delicacies;[153] this would constitute one aspect of the influence of the problem on his life. If he was a rich glutton, of the sort who was willing to pay thousands of sesterces for a fish, or ten million sesterces for a single meal, as Gaius Caesar (i.e., Caligula, reigned AD 37–41) allegedly once did,[154] his financial resources were eventually depleted. Economic hardship could follow, and even if he had a more relaxed attitude to it than the gourmet Apicius, who was said to have killed himself with poison when only ten million sesterces remained of his fortune, having squandered a hundred million on pricy food,[155] it was a result best avoided. More generally, stories of the sorry end of gluttons was a warning to their audiences, as in Suetonius' biography of the emperor Vitellius (reigned AD 69), who was taunted for his gluttony as he was led to his own execution;[156] our narratives certainly fall into this category of warning examples as well.

Having identified these vicious effects on his life, and coming to the conclusion that he would rather be rid of them, the next step would be to

review any situations in which the temptations of the palate were successfully resisted. Finding such "unique outcomes",[157] discussion on what characterised these situations, why resistence was successful and how this strategy could be extended to other situations in the future, would ensue. By constructing detailed stories about these unique outcomes, the seed of change can take root in the individual's life, and as the new strategy is implemented in other situations, the story of resistence can be strengthened further, and may ultimately become one of the stories of the new self.

As we can plainly see from this account, both Epictetus' Stoic therapy and narrative therapy is predicated on the agency of the individual, and works to empower him in order to assume responsibility and real control over his life. Locating the ultimate source of *akrasia* outside the self does not imply waiving responsibility for one's choices, but neither is it fair to let the individual bear the brunt of the perceived failings of the state. The analogy often drawn between the Roman citizen's body and the "body" of the state invites mapping the vice of *luxuria* onto both.[158] Given the use and abuse of the figure of the glutton in invective,[159] executing this kind of mapping was quite common in Roman culture. Thus, the octopuses and the killer whales in the stories do not only appear to represent the intrusion of the wild into the man-built city: they play on the fear that they might not merely undermine our civilisation, but rather that *we* could turn into *them*.

Conclusions

11 The Therapy of Fear

Storytelling can function therapeutically, bring comfort to those who fear future ills, and console those who have suffered loss. By weaving these emotions into a plot, a plot structured according to well-established cultural patterns, the verbalisation of fundamental anxieties and fears could be achieved. Many of the worries, anxieties and fears concerned threats to the most vulnerable in society, those who could not fend for themselves: the new-born baby, young children, and pregnant women.

The recognition of their vulnerability is of long standing, but the vulnerability of another group is seldom framed as such. Here we suggest that the dead were equally perceived as vulnerable, since they lacked control over that final service the living were considered to owe them: proper funerary rites and a real grave. As restless ghosts, i.e., dead without status, they had to be incorporated into the community again by receiving these funerary rites.

In addition to these groups which were viewed as vulnerable, young men also figure in the stories. They were not regarded as vulnerable in the proper sense of the word, but rather as unprotected due to their impulsive and immature character; they easily succumbed to lust and passion, which posed a threat to the survival of the family. Accordingly, all these groups – babies and young children, young women and young men – together represented the significant stages in the reproduction of the family, a fact that is reflected in the stories.

Similarly, stories that articulated anxieties and fears related to the urban environment offered a means by which these emotions could be coped with. A significant proportion of the stories analysed in this study, also those regarding threats to the family, deal with events taking place at night. This demonstrates a deep sense of vulnerability, even defencelessness, during the dark hours of the night. The narratives dealing with anxiety and fear thus often have a temporal component, and, correspondingly, we frequently find that there was a topographical one.

Taking Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier's analytical concept of "rhythmanalysis" as a point of departure, we argue that one can see a cyclical rhythm in the emotions encountered in the urban contexts of the Roman world. "Emotional topography", as we have termed this analytical tool, is based on the fact that specific places evoked different emotions depending on what the time was. A place that often induced a wide range of emotions during the day, many of which were positive, could bring forth emotions such as anxiety,

fear and dread at night. We see a cyclical pattern in how emotions in places – such as cross-roads, cemeteries, and inns – shifted between day and night.

Through storytelling, teller and audience alike could address these anxieties and fears, which had a bearing on their very way of life and the fundamental conditions of their existence, both as fragile humans and as social beings. Thus, these stories helped the audience to make sense of their world, and an analysis of them provides us with an understanding of this world, offering us important insights into the history of emotions in the Roman period. In this chapter, we discuss our overarching conclusions concerning the verbalisation of emotion in the stories, and the ways in which they could be utilised in the therapy of fear. Using the same procedure as in the rest of the book, we draw on ancient philosophy as well as modern therapies and research to construct our argument.

11.1 The Verbalisation of Emotion

Emotions are at the core of storytelling, as one of its primary functions is to stir the emotions of the audience: storytellers can evoke fear, provoke laughter, induce pity and so on, with great skill (Chapter 2.2). The verbalisation of emotions in the stories studied was accomplished by inserting emotion-laden elements into the traditional plot outlines of these originally oral stories. Keeping in mind that these plot outlines are given by tradition, but can be submitted to substantial reshaping by the teller, a number of verbalisation strategies can be discerned in our material.

The choice of characters emerges as an important tool in the verbalisation of emotion, as certain types of characters seem to carry an emotional aura with them, from one context to another; nurses are a case in point (Chapter 6). The ways in which the action of the narrative was moulded are also indicative of the emotional charge of the stories; witness Apuleius' preference for a sad ending to the story of Socrates and Aristomenes, which could have received a happy ending similar to that documented in modern Greek oral tradition (Chapter 7).

Within this larger framework of characters and actions which constitute the overall structure of the stories, emotions can be emplotted on two levels: as emotions attributed to the characters, and as emotions potentially elicited in the audience. Sometimes these are the same, but often they are not. If the child-killing demon Lamia is explicitly said to envy other women their blessing of children, the audience is not expected to feel the same envy: the audience is intended to fear the threat she poses to them and their families

(Chapter 5); the emotional response of the audience should rely on the consequences that the emotions of the character could have for them. As for emotions elicited in the audience, individual motifs can also convey specific emotional charges, even when these remain implicit, as in the case of the disgust sewers normally evoked in the Roman mind (Chapter 10).

Focusing on anxiety and fear in particular, these emotions are usually not explicitly framed as the desired response in the stories we have studied. The audience is expected to grasp this on its own; it does not have to receive instructions from the teller. Nevertheless, it is evident that the notions of what we, in the modern Western world, would subsume under the headings of anxiety and fear actually covered a spectrum of related emotions and emotional responses in the milieux of Classical Rome and Greece. Stories that evoked fear could also elicit a titillating sense of pleasure, and stories depicting other people's fear could rouse laughter (Chapter 7.1).

In addition, it is clear that these emotions were often either interconnected or associated with other emotions. Emotions such as envy, anger, love and erotic passion could be the cause of fear, whereas other emotions such as regret and remorse were associated with fear without being its cause. An example of the latter was the remorse that arose when the most vulnerable in society, new-born babies, had not been properly protected (Chapter 6.1). Fear and revulsion could be paired without one being the cause of the other (Chapters 8.3 & 10.5), and fear was a constituent part of superstition, which was commonly regarded as a more permanent mental disposition (Chapters 9.1–9.3).

Envy was perceived as a particularly destructive power – one that was inherently harmful, potentially even lethal[1] – regardless of whether this emotion emanated from other people, demons or gods.[2] The deeply feared reproductive demons discussed in Chapter 5 were thought to be driven by envy: an envy so strong that it caused them to kill children. The fear that one's family could face different dangers and adversities was very real. As we have seen the levels of mortality among infants, young children and women of childbearing age were simply staggering in the Roman era. Anger was equally regarded as a detrimental emotion, even more so if it was experienced by people or creatures endowed with a great deal of power, as in Chapter 7.1 where an abandoned witch demonstrates how dangerous anger can be.

Love and erotic passion could in some contexts be pleasant, whereas in other contexts these emotions could pose a real threat to the family. In a society where many marriages were arranged, the ideal relationship was characterised by *concordia* "harmony", respect and love of a quiet kind. In contrast, passionate love and erotic attraction could present a danger to marriages and

families, and were consequently feared (Chapter 7). For this reason, young men seeking sexual pleasures outside the bonds of marriage, or marrying women from outside their own community, were perceived as a tangible threat.

The importance of the family cannot be stressed enough, for although colourful individuals may abound in Roman history, Roman society was not of a pronounced individualistic nature. Quite to the contrary, it was a society in which the family comprised one of the cornerstones, and consequently it was one in which family values were revered. In many respects, the individual was dependent on his or her family, not only from a practical perspective, but equally from an emotional standpoint. This view is reflected in a work on Roman history by Dio Cassius (*c.* AD 164–after 229), where he states that a good wife will – besides her duties as housekeeper and mother – also provide support in sickness and in health, and in good fortune as well as in misfortune.[3]

While the family, on the one hand, provided a sense of security, the threats to it were a cause of anxieties and fear on the other. One way of dealing with this was to verbalise the emotions involved, as telling and listening to stories filled a therapeutic function. Moreover, many of these stories carried a clear moral message, such as the dire consequences of engaging in extra-marital sex.

11.2 Externalising Blame: Scapegoats and Sticky Objects

Different emotions such as envy or love could be fixed on a specific character, who was seen to embody them. Two different processes seem to be at work, each with a distinct end result, though both are intended to externalise blame. In the first, blame is actively *being placed on* a scapegoat; this process has been noted in earlier research, most importantly by Sarah Iles Johnston in her discussion of child-killing demons.[4] Scapegoats tend to be purely evil and one-dimensional characters and, in our material, scapegoating is primarily employed to assign blame for sudden misfortunes, when no moral transgression on the part of the victims can be cited as their cause.

In the second, *guilt* is being *imputed* to a sticky object,[5] which can be blamed for misfortunes, but the burden of responsibility lies equally with the victim, who has failed to be on his or her guard. Regarding the scapegoat, we might say: "*You* did this!" Concerning the sticky object, we might think: "Oh, we know what you are like!" Sticky characters tend to be complex and multidimensional, and they can be the objects of an extensive cultural debate. The nurse in Chapter 6 is a case in point.

The witches in Chapter 7 are something of an anomaly in this scheme. They are more unreservedly evil than a sticky object would normally be, which places them in the category of scapegoats. However, the degree of blame assigned to the victim is significantly higher than is usual for scapegoats, which makes them more like sticky objects. As with any classificatory scheme, the one outlined here fails to cover all concrete instances as neatly as the classification would suggest. Yet it might also point to the peculiar status of witches in Roman culture as terrible, larger-than-life figures. Since their function is to evoke fascinated horror at least as much as it is to explain misfortune, these exigencies are difficult to reconcile.

However, not only human beings can be sticky objects, but equally specific species of animals, such as monkeys and octopuses. They share the characteristic of multidimensionality and ambiguity that is present in the image of the nurse, and they are often assimilated to human beings: the monkey is said to mimic man, and a clever person can be likened to an octopus. Simultaneously, both the monkey and the octopus were regarded as intelligent as well as stupid (Chapters 6 & 10). As mentioned above, sticky objects are characteristically complex creatures.

11.3 Inns and Harbours as Sticky Places

Even though this possibility has not been sufficiently raised in prior research, it is apparent to us that places can be sticky objects as well; these places tend to be liminal, but not all liminal places constitute sticky objects. Inns and ports are most definitely sticky objects, whereas crossroads and burial grounds are not. Notwithstanding, both are equally important in the verbalisation of emotion, since the setting of the story sets its emotional tone through the evocation of other contexts in which it occurs, and of the emotions it elicits there. On many occasions, this emotional tone is accessed through other narratives.

Inns were, as described in Chapter 8.3, frequently situated on the outskirts of cities, or just outside them, along the roads leading into town. Inns were at once private and public, being open to all paying customers, and they were associated with crime in the form of theft, robbery and murder, and – in what must have constituted traveller's tales – they were also associated with cannibalism, malevolent magic, witches and even werewolves. On hearing such a tale, we suspect that the listener's response would not be one of surprise; we all know what those inns are like.

The cause of anxiety was primarily not a fear of strangers staying the night under the same roof, but rather it was the female and male innkeepers

themselves; they were also sticky objects. When the fictional character Socrates pours his scorn on innkeepers, as discussed in Chapter 7, he testifies to this status of innkeepers in Roman culture. In a society where many would have known the majority of the people they met – family, friends, next-door-neighbours, acquaintances and enemies alike – the traveller would sometimes come to places where he knew no one. Moreover, no one may have known that he was there, and travelling in business meant carrying money and goods. The sense of vulnerability this must have entailed is likely to be the root and stem of all the stories of the supernatural as well as those of violent crime.

A number of stories analysed in this study are set in harbour cities – or cities which had major ports – Ostia, Puteoli, Carteia, Megara, Corinth and Athens. They were on the boundaries between land and sea, consequently also between civilisation and nature. These harbours seem to have represented, on the one hand, the familiar and well-known, and, on the other hand, the unfamiliar and foreign. This liminality is probably the cause of an underlying sense of unease and anxiety discernible in these stories and constitutes the reason for why the stories were set there.

Some of these places, especially Athens, Corinth and Megara, could boast a proud past, and Puteoli was famed as a melting pot of cultures. They were sticky objects to varying degrees; Corinth stands out as unusually sticky, as the city furnished the setting for all kinds of outrageous stories from Herodotus (*c.* 484–*c.* 420 BC) onward. It is to be noted that it is not merely the inhabitants of Corinth that are sticky objects, but the city in and of itself. While the Corinthians did have a reputation for being debauched, the city of Corinth itself as a site of vice appears to have been a far more powerful image. That the place was teeming with man-eating demons and aggressive ghosts was hardly a cause for disbelief to anyone; it is what you would expect of Corinth (Chapters 7 & 9).

11.4 Emotional Topography

As mentioned above, harbours and inns alike were often deemed dodgy, perceived as places where licentiousness thrived and where *anything* might happen. Both were viewed with a degree of distrust and even dread: in short, they were *sticky places*. But there was one significant difference in the emotions these places elicited. When it came to inns, there was a clear temporal aspect, a difference between day and night. Staying the night at an inn was also associated with other emotions: unease, anxiety and outright fear.

In this book, we introduce the theoretical concept of "emotional topography" – a concept that emphasises the relation between space and

emotions – and point to the fact that there was often a temporal aspect to this. Inspired by the ideas of Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier on rhythmanalysis, we argue that Roman cities – like their modern counterparts – had a characteristic rhythm, a rhythm that involved an array of different aspects of everyday life: people's movements, linked to which were social aspects and aspects of gender, and the emotions experienced. During the day, one would encounter a wide array of emotions in the city, both positive and negative – joy, happiness, contentment, love, envy, irritation and ire, to mention but a few. Nightfall narrowed down the number of emotions typically experienced; at night, disgust, anxiety and fear seem to have dominated.

Cemeteries are a case in point of this rhythm (Chapter 8.3). Since at least the time when the first laws were introduced in Rome – the *Law of the Twelve Tables* from 451/450 BC – it was strictly prohibited to bury the dead within the religious and formal boundaries of the city. While the burial grounds formed the extension of the urban landscape – as they were located along the roads leading into the cities – they were beyond its borders. Cemeteries were thus liminal places, situated in the borderland between the city and its suburban or rural surroundings, and also between the living and the dead. During the day, they would be visited by relatives and friends, and on the roads alongside them, a steady stream of people would be passing in and out of the city.

At night, they were inhabited by the outcasts of society, the totally destitute and homeless beggars who sought shelter in abandoned tombs and prostitutes who plied their trade among the monuments. Sometimes, they were frequented by robbers and thieves who hid stolen goods behind the graves. They were also believed to be the haunt of witches who used human remains to perform illicit magic.

From an emotional perspective, there were significant shifts between day and night. During the day, cemeteries were associated with loss and grief, but on holidays for the dead, there was joy and happiness, with reunions of family and friends who celebrated and commemorated loved ones who had passed away. At night, in contrast, it was a deeply dreaded place, evoking a sense of anxiety and fear. It was not primarily the spirits of the dead who were the cause of fear, rather it was the living. Those with supernatural powers and malevolent intentions – witches – were regarded as particularly fear-inspiring. But the violence of robbers, thieves and other pariahs of society was also deeply feared.

As a place for the dead, there was also a dread of being ritually polluted, but the burial grounds were equally seen as unclean and filthy from a practical perspective. Because they were situated far from the cities' public latrines – these establishments may also have been closed at night, since otherwise

people travelling along the roads relieved themselves in the shelter of tombs and monuments. The pollution and filth led to emotional reactions such as disgust and repulsion.

Crossroads constituted another charged place in the emotional topography of the city and its surroundings. Like cemeteries, they were associated with death, albeit of a different, violent variety: suicides and executions. Corpses of people who had ended their own lives – an act often perceived as shameful – were sometimes dumped at crossroads. As a warning against acts of banditry and other capital offences, gallows were set up along roads and crossroads. Consequently, crossroads were thought to carry the pollution of death, and people would shun them and hurry past even during the day.

Being out on the roads after nightfall was ill advised, for there was a real risk of being robbed and, if things got out of hand, even murdered. Some sources even speak of brigands dressed up as ghosts, exploiting the fact that many believed that those who had died a violent death and been denied a proper burial could not enter the Realm of the Dead, but remained as restless spirits.

While some specific places were clearly deemed fear-invoking at night – inns, cemeteries and crossroads – the city as a whole elicited a sense of unease and anxiety after sunset. It was seen as a scary and unpleasant experience to leave one's home and walk around town due to the risk of encountering aggressive drunks or violent robbers. During the day, the sunlit streets would be teeming with people; at night, they would instead be pitch dark and largely deserted, the shops along the streets closed and the doors of private houses carefully locked. The city thus had two faces, one dark, dangerous and frightening, the other sunlit and reasonably safe.

11.5 The Therapy of Emotions

In this study, we have attempted to reconstruct how the originally oral stories that constitute its focus could have functioned therapeutically, both as means of emplotting, and thus verbalising, fears related to various problems in life, and as sites of reflection at which these problems and emotions could become the object of contemplation and transformation. The spatial metaphor is consciously chosen here as narrative opens up onto a Taleworld that is distinct from the here and now of the act of narration, the Storyrealm.[6] In the following, we argue that the creation of a reflexive distance is crucial for the therapeutic effect of the stories, as it enables a separation between the person, the problem and the story. This is because the nature of the Taleworld, as fundamentally

distinct from the world in which it is told, entails that narrative possesses the wonderful property of not only representing "reality", but of holding it up for scrutiny, challenging it and reshaping it. Narrative can offer an indirect means of communicating a problem, as well as a way of attacking it openly. For instance, legends of child-killing demons (Chapter 5) could conceivably be used by those who had experienced the loss of a child as a circumlocution to speak of threats to the family without divulging intimate details concerning the tellers' real families.

Choosing to narrate in the fictive form of the legend, as opposed to the autobiographical narrative which must build on personal experiences, allows greater distance from the events of the narrative on the one hand – they touch on one's experience, but do not coincide with it – and, on the other, gives greater leeway for manipulating its contents without being seen as misrepresenting those experiences. Conversely, these self-same legends could equally be employed to name a culprit for a real-life loss, whereby the stories would serve an explanatory function.

In several chapters, we argue that distance from an experience can be created in several ways, whether by representing it symbolically or literally, by closely following the traditional plot or by embellishing it with literary flourishes. In Chapter 5, we suggest, on the basis of therapeutic practices developed within modern narrative therapy, that personifying the threat to children's lives, as done with child-killing demons in the stories, engenders a distance that allows pause to reflect on the nature and influence of this threat. This process of naming, which is ultimately a method of endowing the threat with a concrete form, is empowering, as it allows people to mentally disentangle themselves from the problem and enables them to take action toward a solution.

In Chapter 7, the bonds of erotic love are being severed in the stories by exaggerated vilification of the beloved, a therapeutic technique we have labelled negative description. It involves a high degree of hyperbole and studied violation of the lover's expectations of hearing only praise for his beloved, which is used with the intent of creating a rupture between lover and beloved, a distance that promotes reflection on the evils of the relationship.

Reflexive distance can be created in other ways as well. Introducing symbols, and retaining an awareness of the fact that this is what they are, can have a distancing function as well. In Chapter 6, the figure of the nurse, who in her negligence endangers the life of her charge, does not primarily represent a threat that was perceived to be real, in the sense that infant death in real life would not generally be blamed on nurses. However, as a symbol the nurse embodies and condenses the tensions of a social system in which

the practice of leaving infants to a wet-nurse generated anxiety regarding the trustworthiness of the nurse.

The effect of this distancing function of symbols is even more pronounced in Chapter 10. The figure of the gluttonous octopus is too different from a human being to be apprehended as anything other than a symbol, and, in this respect, a critique of its luxurious habits is more effective than the same critique levelled at a human glutton. It can be delivered with grander gestures and can play on our dismay at the disconcerting idea of humans becoming like animals by succumbing to their basest desires.

Distancing is a prime ingredient in some therapies, as already hinted at. Apart from the distancing techniques involved in Epicurean negative description, they are also a precondition for the successful performance of Stoic critical spectatorship, in which the delusions and foibles of narrative characters are minutely and empathically examined with a view to reforming them (Chapter 7). Nevertheless, distancing by and for itself is not necessarily enough.

Sometimes, identification is called for, as in the elicitation of pity and fear that enables the experience of tragic catharsis. As we argued in Chapter 7, Apuleius' story of Socrates and Aristomenes could be used to educate the emotions by imaginatively inserting ourselves into their perspective, and exploring the possibility of experiencing their misfortune through narrative play. Correspondingly, employing stories of child-killing demons in the practice of pre-rehearsing future ills also entails identification with the misfortunes of the victims and their families (Chapter 5); otherwise the stories could not function as a medium of pre-rehearsal.

In many cases, however, the interplay between increasing and diminishing the distance from a problem is essential. The exemplary function of narrative that is a cornerstone of various therapies discussed in this book tends to require such an approach. We see this in the consolation of grief recommended by Cicero, which proceeds by providing positive examples of successful coping with loss (Chapter 5). It is also observable in the therapy of arrogance – a difficult undertaking though this is – which is executed by the narration of stories that provide positive or negative examples of decent or arrogant conduct (Chapter 10). Similarly, it is at work in the folkloric therapy of the fear of becoming a restless ghost, which relies on the possibility of emulating the actions outlined in ghost stories (Chapter 9).

The emulation of examples demands, on the one hand, identification, to make the audience realise that these misfortunes could happen to them too, and, on the other, distancing, so as not to be overpowered by the miseries of others. Were this to happen, the examples would no longer function as therapeutic tools, but as vehicles of emotional contagion; the distinction

between self and other would collapse, and the necessary reflexive distance disappear.

Hence, for successful emulation to take place, the audience must be able to relate to the story, but not to an excessive degree. This is achieved in the act of interpreting the story, when the experiences that have been cast in a narrative form return to the "real world", yet enriched with new meanings and perspectives on their journey through narrative. Listening to or reading a story can induce us to imagine a different world, a different way of life, and eventually, to learn something new about ourselves. By changing our perceptions of the world in which we live, narrative can provide us with new models for understanding and acting in it.[7]

There is often a tension between confrontation and connection in our engagement with the Taleworld. We can immerse ourselves in it, which encourages us to come to rest in the narrative and cease to reflect on how its world relates to our own; this approach would not be particularly useful from a therapeutic point of view. Alternatively, we could use the lessons of the narrative to define and clarify our present vision of the world, turning the narrative into a utilitarian tool for confirming our current convictions. The ideal reception of a narrative, however, would incorporate both these tendencies: we should pay attention to the new possibilities of expression offered by the Taleworld, while encouraging the impulse to put the lessons learned into practice.[8] Only then would the stories be truly therapeutic.

This study is developed on the basis of stories concerning anxiety and fear – belonging to three closely related folkloric genres: legends, urban legends and novellas – and for this particular purpose, they are unusually apt.[9] The legend and its cognates, focused as they are on threats to human society, are perfect vehicles for the expression of such fears. Thus, stories of this sort helped the audience to make sense of their world, working in a therapeutic manner. Simultaneously, an analysis of these provides us with an understanding of this world and offers us profound insights into the emotional history of Roman antiquity.

Appendix

Friends from the Deep Sea: Dolphins

If octopuses and killer whales in the legends were represented as foes that evoked fear (see Chapter 10), dolphins, in contrast, were thought to be of a mild disposition and the relationship with them was of a friendly nature.[1] There are some similarities between all these stories, most importantly that the animals left their natural habitat – the deep sea – to approach, or even cross, the threshold to the human world. While the number of stories about octopuses and killer whales is limited, the complex of legends about human-dolphin relations is both rich and varied.[2]

The emotions that the dolphins evoked in most cases differed from the ones octopuses and killer whales incited. There are, however, a couple of cases of dolphins causing fear. In Aenus, a city in Thrace, dolphins tried to rescue one of their kin who had been captured and wounded. These dolphins scared the local inhabitants so much that they released it.[3] Another story – of a dolphin enamoured with a beautiful boy in Iassus – tells how the boy was very cautious initially, even feeling anxiety and fear. Soon these feelings were replaced by other emotions: friendship and love.[4] Dolphins were described as particularly affectionate animals, to their own kin and humans alike.[5] Those who approached shores and harbours were often said to do so seeking human companionship, and as mentioned above, also friendship and love. In fact, the actions and emotions of dolphins were often described as akin to those of humans.

Dolphins were idealised – they were thought to be equal to man in a number of respects – even superior to man when it came to morals, as they were thought to be unswervingly loyal and honest.[6] Unlike monkeys and apes, considered to be able to only clumsily imitate humans and clearly lacking a true understanding of their actions (see Chapter 6), dolphins were evidently considered to be comparable to man in terms of their intellectual capacity.[7] Although they belong to nature, they are equally depicted as part of the cultivated world, the best example of this being the dolphins' love for music, particularly the flute.[8]

While dolphins were portrayed in positive terms, the descriptions of octopuses and killer whales were derogatory and demeaning. As mentioned above, the latter were likened with the low-lives of Roman society – thieves,

robbers and gladiators – or military adversaries fought in battle (see Chapter 10). Whereas octopuses and killer whales are said to represent a lethal threat, a number of the legends about dolphins constitute the very opposite: they save the lives of people in mortal danger when they suffered shipwreck, or who had simply swum too far out from the shore.[9] By far the best known example is that of the Greek poet Arion (*c.* 600 BC). Arion, who was a poet at the court of Periander of Corinth, was on his way back to Corinth from Italy when the ship's crew plotted to rob him of his riches and kill him. Although he pleaded with them to take his possessions and spare his life, they forced him to choose between either staying aboard and killing himself or leaping overboard into the open sea, facing an almost certain death. Before being forced to jump into the water, the savage and cruel sailors – wanting to hear the best singer in the world – permitted him to sing one last song. But rather than perishing in the waves, he was rescued by a divine intervention: a dolphin sent out by Poseidon. This dolphin carried him on his back to Corinth, where he could confront the evil-doers.[10]

As mentioned above, there were stories of dolphins seeking human companionship, forming friendly relations with an individual or with a whole community. Sometimes the relationships, however, went well beyond that of friendship. One of the most widespread types of legend concerns dolphins passionately falling in love with beautiful boys as they are bathing in the sea after exercising in the gymnasium.[11] This situation found in a number of these stories gives a typically Greek setting and cultural context where the boys attract the attention of adult men (or, in this case male dolphins) – bringing to mind the Greek custom of *paiderastia*.[12] In other words, the dolphins were depicted as Greek gentlemen of the classical era, the pinnacle of civilisation. These tend to be stories with a sad ending: they close either with the demise of the dolphin or of the beloved boy.

There were also stories, quite possibly with a factual background, of dolphins helping fishermen to drive fish into their nets. In one of these, found in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, it is mentioned that besides being awarded fish for their assistance, the dolphins were also furnished with bread soaked in wine.[13] Typically human foodstuffs like this did not only differ from the dolphins' natural diet, to the Roman mind bread and wine epitomized civilisation itself.[14] It has to be stressed that, of all the stories concerning dolphins, it is only two – in Pliny the Elder's work – that mention dolphins eating human food.[15]

Notes

Notes to Chapter 1

1.1

1 Brummett 2010, 9. We follow the contemporary definition of this method (see e.g. Brummett 2010; Pickard 2013), rather than the original one associated with the New Criticism of the 1930s to the 1960s (Richards 1929; Ransom 1941). According to the proponents of this type of literary criticism, literature – and especially poetry – should be read as a self-contained artistic whole, without any sideways glances at its historical and cultural context (Ransom 1937). While we do not agree with the ideal of transhistorical meaning inherent in such a position, nor of the detachment of the text from its context, we nevertheless find the fundamental method of close reading useful. Despite the anti-contextualist purposes for which it was designed, it is still apt for relating our texts to their contexts; by proceeding from clues in the texts discovered through slow and deliberate rereading, we can identify relevant aspects of contexts.

2 Brummett 2010, 17.

3 In other words, for us, the historical and cultural background is indispensable to the interpretation of the stories.

4 Kristeva 1978, 85; Tarkka 1993, 170–173.

5 John Miles Foley has called it "traditional referentiality" (see Foley 1991, 7). While the notion of intertextuality was conceived to demonstrate relationships between texts, and hence rejected the ideal of the self-contained text propounded by the New Criticism, its original formulation nevertheless had the effect of perpetuating the purely literary slant of New Criticism. Even if the text no longer possessed a single meaning, it was still an intersection of *textual* surfaces: the writer addressed him- or herself to a recipient that was essentially an embodiment of literary history, rather than to a real-life context, see Kristeva 1978, 83. From a folkloristic point of view, however, a complete conflation of text and context would usually imply the loss of vital information on how a text was produced and received, since a textualised context would not cover all relevant aspects of context. This is less of a problem for us, as the contexts we cite tend to be accessible to us precisely through ancient texts (cf. Tarkka 1993, 172–173).

6 Zachariah Pickard performs a similar move in his rehabilitation of close reading in literary studies, but phrases it as a movement from the general to the particular, in the sense that general ideas are used to explicate a single text, rather than the single text being used to bolster arguments about grand ideas (see Pickard 2013, 58).

7 Robertson 2010, 5–16.

8 Overholser 2010; Overholser 2011.

9 Listed as Nussbaum 1996 and Nussbaum 2005 respectively in the bibliography.

10 The heroine of the book, Nikidion, was, according to Diogenes Laertius (*Vitae philosophorum*, 10.7), a follower of Epicurus, one of four courtesans mentioned as supporters of his doctrine. Nikidion's adventures in the book are Nussbaum's invention.

11 Kaster 2005, 5.

1.2

12 Ahmed 2004, 11–13, 67, 74.

13 Lévi-Strauss 1962, 128.

14 Lefebvre & Régulier in Lefebvre 2004.

15 Pain 1997; Pain 2000; Pain 2001.

Notes to Chapter 2

1 Grimm 1857. On Homer (fl. around 700 BC) as an oral poet, see Foley 1991, xi–xvi and Chapters 1–2; Janko 1998, esp. 4–6. For a general overview of folktales in Homer, see Hansen 1997a. On Herodotus, see below.

2 See for instance Hansen 2002, 18; Heath 2011, 93–94.

3 Oral elements can be traced in a number of the ancient novels, both the Greek novels (i.e., novels written in Greek in the Roman Imperial period) and Latin novels (also written in the Roman Imperial period) (Winkler 1980, 156; Hansen 1997b, 118–119; Anderson 1999; Anderson 2007); however, they are most evident in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (Scobie 1983).

4 The oral origin of some of Herodotus' (*c.* 484–*c.* 420 BC) material has come to the fore in a number of scholarly papers, see for example Murray 2001a [1987] & 2001b; Vignolo-Munson 1993; Stadter 1997; Hansen 2010.

5 The oral element is very evident in Pausanias (fl. *c.* AD 150) (Pretzler 2005; Anderson 2006, 31).

6 For a discussion of the oral elements in Minucius Felix (fl. AD 200–240) and Tertullian (*c.* AD 160–*c.* 240), see Ellis 1983.

7 Rose 1964 [1928], ch. 10.

8 Lloyd (1983) discusses folklore in ancient Greek science.

2.1

9 In this respect, we follow Carl Wilhelm von Sydow's Scandinavian definition of folklore (see von Sydow 1944, 5).

10 On folklore as an expression of world view, see e.g. Dundes 1971.

11 Bauman 2012, 112.

12 Amusement is the first function mentioned by William Bascom in his classic delineation of the four functions of folklore, but it is one he treats as superficial and eventually refuses to include as one of the four major functions (Bascom 1954, 343). On emotions stirred by the narration of folklore (see Arvidsson 1999, 42).

13 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.27–28.

14 Bascom 1954, 344–346.

15 Oring 1986, 8; Hansen 2002, 4.

16 On the anonymity of folklore, see Arvidsson 1999, 11.

17 On "traditionalisation", see Vaz da Silva 2012, 41–42.

18 Vaz da Silva 2012, 43.

19 Toelken 1996, 58.

20 Holbek 1990, 482; Toelken 1996, 59.

21 Briggs & Bauman 1992; Simonsen 1995, 114–115.

22 On trends in the study of variation in folklore research, see Honko 2000.

23 Hansen 1997a, 445; Hansen 2002, 8–9.

24 Since the late 1960s, folklorists have made a distinction between "analytical (etic)" and "ethnic (emic)" genres (see Dundes 1968 and Ben-Amos 1976 [1969]); the ancient Romans had a poorly differentiated genre system concerning longer narrative forms and did not discriminate terminologically between folktale and legend as we do today (see Hansen 1988, 1125), but we prefer to use the analytical genres here to bring out differences in form and function. Hansen (2017, 4–37) makes an ambitious attempt to construct a genre system for ancient Greek and Roman folk narrative, based on both emic and etic categories.

25 af Klintberg 1987, 12, 56–57; Tangherlini 1994, 8–9; Lüthi 1976 [1966], 24; Tangherlini 2013, 48–49.

26 Tangherlini 2013, 50.

27 Tangherlini 2013, 50–51.

28 Dégh & Vázsonyi 1976 [1971], 94, 108–109; Tangherlini 1994, 11, 22.

29 Tangherlini 1994, 8, 11, 19–20; Brunvand 2003, 3–4; Wolf-Knuts 1987, 173.

30 Simpson 1981; Tangherlini 1995, Wolf-Knuts 1987.

31 Stahl 1979, 43; Arvidsson 1999, 31.

32 Foley 1991, 7.

33 Classic statements on intertextuality in folklore studies include Stewart 1979; Briggs & Bauman 1992; Tarkka 1993.

2.2

34 Salles 1981, 7.

35 Hansen 2002, 12–13.

36 Scobie 1969, 21.

37 Scobie 1979, 233; Scobie 1983, 11–12; Horsfall 1989b, 194–195.

38 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 2.20.1; Scobie 1979, 239; Scobie 1983, 11–12.

39 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 20.10.

40 Suetonius *Divus Augustus*, 74 & 78; Scobie 1979, 237–238; Scobie 1983, 13.

41 A different view on this matter has been put forward by Alex Scobie, who advocated the notion that the storytellers who were hired by Augustus, told stories: "… about the miracles of gods, … tales that [had] a strong religious colouring", in other words storytelling of a more respected kind (Scobie 1969, 26). The basis of this argument is Suetonius' use of the term *aretalogus* rather than *fabulator*.

42 Alex Scobie has suggested that this was a habit that Augustus may have carried with him since childhood, and quite possibly the young Octavian (as his name was before being given the honorary name Augustus by the Senate in 27 BC, *OCD*, s.v. "Augustus, Augusta as titles") did have nurses who told such stories. It appears less than likely, however, that this in any way implied the emperor's "childish taste" as suggested by Scobie (Scobie 1979, 239). Rather it can be seen as part of Augustus' very deliberate creation of a self-image as a man of simple tastes and unpretentious needs, as reflected in the biography by Suetonius: a man with homemade clothes, and modest eating habits (Suetonius *Divus Augustus*, 73 & 76), yet a well-educated and well-versed nobleman (*ibid* 84–85; Levick 2010, 252).

43 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 9.33. This was to have taken place in the province of Africa, in the coastal town of Hippo Diarrhytus (present-day Bizerte in Tunisia).

44 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.5–11.

45 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.28–6.25. See Hansen 2017, 43–44.

46 Petronius *Satyrica*, 61.

47 Horsfall 1989b, 194; Horsfall 1989a *passim*; Anderson 2006, 59. Macrobius (fl. *c*. AD 400) stresses that at dinner-parties (*convivia*) conversations should be of a morally unimpeachable kind (Macrobius *Saturnalia*, 16.1.4), which can be put in question in this case. For Thelyphron's story, see Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 2.20–31.

48 Philip Stadter's study of North Carolina oral traditions and how they can work as an analogue in understanding the oral traditions in the ancient world, suggests that male and female storytellers adapted the traditional stories to the audience. For instance, a male storyteller telling a tale to a group consisting of only men, would be more broad and vulgar (Stadter 1997, 20). See also the discussion in Hansen 1988, 1128.

49 Heath 2011.

50 Massaro 1977, 113; Scobie 1979, 242–243; Graverini 2006, 89–90; Heath 2011, 84.

51 Macrobius *Commentarius ex Cicerone in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.2.8; *SHA Clodius Albinus*, 12.12; Graverini 2006, 89; Anderson 2006, *passim*; Scobie 1983.

52 Massaro 1977.

53 Horace *Satirae*, 2.6.77–117. This was a well-known story from Aesop's fables (Babrius *Fabulae*, 108), a story with which most would be familiar (Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 11.22). It is also a widespread international folktale (ATU 112).

54 Kenaan 2000, 381; Hansen 2002, 12.

55 Bradley 1992, 201; Dixon 1992, 104, 118–119.

56 Wet-nurses were – for natural reasons – in their childbearing age, and Soranus of Ephesus (fl. *c*. 98–138 AD) stresses that a wet-nurse should be between twenty and forty years of age (Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.8; see also Joshel 1986, 5). Other nurses may of course have been older.

57 Hansen 2002, 12. As pointed out by Jan Ziolkowski these nurses – and their stories – played a significant role in the formation of these young men before their schooling (2002, 96). See also Bradley 1992, 203; Dixon 1992, 54.

58 Strabo *Geographia*, 1.2.8; Plutarch *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*, 15 [= *Moralia*, 1040b]; Lucian *Philopseudes*, 2. Being "scared as a child of bogeys" was a simile used by a number of ancient authors, see for instance: Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 11.23; Libanius *Orationes*, 33.42.7.

59 Babrius *Fabulae*, 16.1–2.

60 Scobie 1983, 22.

61 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 4.74.

62 Tertullian *Adversus Valentinianos*, 3.

63 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 55.10–11. Lullabies were also sung to soothe children and make them fall asleep: Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 1.10.32; Persius *Saturae*, 3.15–18; Ausonius *Epistulae*, 12.90; Scobie 1983, 21.

64 Plutarch *Theseus*, 23.3 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 8].

65 Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria*, 1.9.2; Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 5.14.3. See also Plutarch *De liberis educandis*, 5 [= *Moralia*, 3f]; Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 2.29.1–2.

66 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 5.14. See also Babrius *Fabulae*, 16.1–2.

67 Cicero *De natura deorum*, 1.34.94; Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.3.83–88; Arnobius *Adversus Gentes*, 5.14; Graverini 2007, 145–146.

68 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 4.32–41.

69 Longus *Daphnis et Chloe*, 1.27.1–4.

70 Stadter 1997, 20.

71 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.2.

72 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.20.

73 Casson 1974, 176.

74 Heliodorus *Aethiopica*, 6.2.2 (while walking).

75 Virgil *Eclogues*, 9.64–65.

76 Seneca the Younger *De brevitate vitae*, 9.5; Ovid *Epistulae ex Ponto*, 2.10.33–38 (travelling in a carriage or by boat).

77 Publilius Syrus *Sententiae*, 116.

78 Petronius *Satyrica*, 111–112.

79 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.4.

80 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 9.33.1–2; Heliodorus *Aethiopica*, 6.1; see also Petronius *Satyrica*, 61.3–62.14; Horsfall 1989b, 194–195. Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 2.20.

81 Hansen 2002, 12–13.

82 We see the same phenomenon of storytellers adapting their stories to the audience in storytelling in traditional societies today.

83 Glassie 1982, 35–57.

84 Petronius *Satyrica*, 111–113. A story similar to that found in Petronius is included in Phaedrus' *Fabulae* (*Appendix Perottina* 15). There has been some scholarly discussion whether this story is based on a literary source, but as is convincingly argued by William Hansen, the most plausible source of origin is an oral tale (Hansen 2002, 274). It is clearly a novella, that is a short realistic story of oral origin, of which Petronius incorporated a number in his *Satyrica* (Anderson 1999, 54–57). The soldier's seduction of the widow is described in military terms, an apparent parody of military metaphors found in Latin elegiac poetry (McGlathery 1998, 321–322). On the fickleness of women, see Walcot 1991, 14–15.

85 According to the Roman ideal a woman should only marry one man in her life – that is remain an *univira* – and not remarry (Rawson 1986, 32). To consent to sex so soon after her husband's demise was an appalling act; in fact, from a legal perspective, a widow was prohibited to remarry until one year had passed (*ibid*, 31). A virtuous married woman (*matrona*) would be expected to react in this manner on a coarse story of this kind, but Tryphaena is clearly not honourable, making the scene even more humorous (Richlin 1992 [1983], 195). On Lichas refusing to laugh, see Maria Plaza's interesting discussion (Plaza 2000, 175–186).

86 Hansen 1998, 109–110.

87 *Vita Aesopi*, 129, 131. One of these stories is not dissimilar to the story of *The Widow of Ephesus*, see Hansen 2002, 276.

88 The storytelling situations described in ancient literature, for instance the stories told at Trimalchio's dinner in Petronius' *Satyrica* strongly suggests this. In other words, it resembled the situation in the modern world, for instance in present day Sweden. Ulf Palmenfelt has discriminated between two types of ghost stories narrated among children: those which deal with matters involving anxiety and that evoke real fear, and those which only temporarily arouse fear, a sensation of a pleasant kind (Palmenfelt 1987, 6). In the modern world, some horror movies have the same effect and aims – evoking a pleasant feeling of fear – a titillating sensation (Stattin 1990, 95).

89 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.5–1.20.

90 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.20.

91 Petronius *Satyrica*, 61.3–62.14.

92 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 2.31.

93 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.4.

94 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.27.

95 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 6.25.

96 Plutarch *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*, 15 [= *Moralia*, 1040b]; Lucian *Philopseudes*, 2.

97 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.92; Cicero *De natura deorum*, 2.2.5; Minucius Felix *Octavius*, 20.3–5.

98 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 4.55–4.166.

99 Flavius Philostratus *Heroicus*, 7.10. See also Philostratus *Imagines*, 1.15.

2.3

100 Brown 1998, xxxii–xxxiv; Stahl 1983, 426.

101 Parry 1987 [1928, 1930]; Lord 2000 [1960]; Ong 1999 [1982]; Foley 1985; Foley 1991; Foley 1995; Foley 2002. Oral-formulaic theory has of course been applied to the poetry of many other cultures and eras, including the epic traditions of the present day.

102 Lewis 1976, 346.

103 de Caro & Jordan 2004, 8–9; Rosenberg 1991, 179.

104 Brown 1998, xxxiv–xxxvii; Stahl 1983, 426–427.

105 Stahl 1983, 422–423; Brown 1998, xxxvi.

106 Dorson (1957, 5, 7) suggests examining biographical evidence for direct contact with folklore, internal evidence in the literary work itself, and corroborative evidence to complement the preceding ones. Lewis (1976) argues for the study of all folklore in literature, regardless of its derivation. Recent contributions investigate the communicative efficacy of lyric folk song in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (DuBois 2000) and the evocation of "tradition" and "the past" as indexes of the modern loss of tradition in H. P. Lovecraft's works (Evans 2005).

107 Kaarle Krohn's *Die folkloristische Arbeitsmethode* from 1926, available in English translation as *Folklore Methodology*, was the first concerted attempt to articulate the methodology of folklore studies (Krohn 1926; Krohn 1971). We see this basic methodology already at work in Wilhelm Grimm's 1857 discussion of the Polyphemus story in the *Odyssey*.

108 Jason 2000, 22–23.

109 Jason 2000; Hansen 2002, 4, 26 n. 11–12.

110 de Caro & Jordan 2004, 7–8; Scobie 1983; Hansen 2002.

111 de Caro & Jordan 2004, 8–9.

2.4

112 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 6.25.

113 This is probably a humorous reference to a popular proverb: "A man told a story to an ass, the ass only shook his ears" which was proverbial for wasted labour, see Zenobius *Proverbia*, 5.42; Horace *Epistulae*, 2.1.199–200 (in this specific case a deaf ass).

114 Scobie 1983, 35. We should note, however, that while many of Apuleius' stories were of oral origin, his rendition could sometimes be very literary, such as is the case with the tale of Cupid and Psyche. The same goes for Pliny the Younger's ghost story in Chapter 9.3.

115 For such positive reception in antiquity, see Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria*, 5.11.19–20; see also the Byzantine Priscian of Caesarea, *Praeexercitamina*, 1.

116 Horace *Satirae*, 2.6.77–117 (the Fable of the Country and the City Mouse); Horace *Epistulae*, 1.1.73–75 (The Lion and the Fox); Horace *Ars poetica*, 340 (a child escaping alive from the demon Lamia's belly). See also Hansen 2002, 18; Heath 2011, 84.

117 Macrobius embodies this superior attitude, dismissing the work of Apuleius and Petronius as: "… this whole category of stories that promises only the pleasure of the ear, which a philosophical treatise expels from its shrine to the nurses' cradles" (Macrobius *Commentarius ex Cicerone in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.2.8). Similarly in the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (*SHA*), Apuleius' work is described with scorn as Punic – that is, African – Milesian Tales: *Milesias Punicas* (*SHA, Clodius Albinus*, 12.12–13). In contrast Apuleius himself clearly took pride in the fact that he wrote in the manner of Milesian Tales, for the very first sentence of his work begins: "But I'll bring together different tales in that Milesian style for you, and caress your

benevolent ears with a pretty murmur, …" (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.1).

118 Herodotus is described as a storyteller (*homo fabulator*) by Roman author Aulus Gellius (AD *c*. 130–*c*. 180) (see Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 3.10.11–12). This notion can, however, be traced back in time and is alluded to in the Greek author Thucydides' (*c*. 460/455–*c*. 400 BC) work *The History of the Peloponnesian War* (1.21–22). The views on Aesop seem to have been divided, for instance in Flavius Philostratus the philosopher Menippus is said to have dismissed Aesop's fables as nonsense for old women and children, whereas the philosopher Apollonius seems to sport a more positive view (Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 5.14.2; 5.15.1). In contrast, Aulus Gellius describes Aesop as both wise and witty, a conveyor of a clear moral message (Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 2.29.1–2). Quintilian in turn argued that the fables ascribed to Aesop tended to delight uneducated rustics (Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria*, 5.11.19).

119 Pretzler 2005, 239; Hansen 1988, 1126; Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 9.38.5.

120 Hansen 1988, 1124; Hansen 1998, 272–275.

121 Hansen 1988, 1126.

122 As the title of this work – *A True Story* – ironically suggests, it barely contains a single word of truth. Indeed, the author assures the reader that the only true statement made is that he lies; this is called the "Liar's Paradox". Lucian makes it clear that he associated lying with the poets, historians and philosophers who had written many "marvellous stories", stories which he will refer to in a manner not unamusing (Lucian *Verae historiae*, 1.4). Although he does not mention these by name (though he does refer to some in another, related, work: Lucian *Philopseudes*, 2), Aristoula Georgiadou and David Larmour have shown that these include authors such as Homer, Herodotus, Ctesias, Aristophanes, Plato, as well as works such as the *Periplus* and different paradoxographical works (Georgiadou & Larmour 1988, 22–44). While there is obvious literary parody in *A True Story*, it can also be argued that Lucian made a more direct use of oral traditions (i.e., folklore). Graham Anderson has pointed to Lucian's use of widely circulated tales, not least tall tales (Anderson 2007, 212–217). It is also noteworthy that a number of the works which Lucian parodies – not least Homer's and Herodotus' works – have been demonstrated to have numerous passages based on oral traditions (see above), "marvellous stories" which Lucian loved to ridicule.

123 Anderson 2006, 46.

124 Hansen 2002, xi.

125 Hansen 2002, 1.

126 Lawson 1964 [1910], 173–180; Hartnup 2004, 85–86, 147–148. See also Blum & Blum 1970, 115, 118–119.

127 Douglas 2010 [1911], 77.

128 See Stadter 1997.

129 For a definition of this term, see above Chapter 2.3.

130 Grimm 1857; Hansen 2002, 289–301.

131 Hansen 2002.

132 Ellis 1983; Mayor 1992; Hansen 1995; Anderson 1999, 52–54; Lassen 2001; Asplund Ingemark 2008; Ermacora 2015.

133 Winkler 1980, 157.

134 Anderson 2006, 49.

135 Hansen 1982, 102; Stadter 1997, 20; Hansen 2002, xi.

136 Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 11.22.

137 Horace *Satirae*, 2.6.77–117. This fable is also found in Babrius (*Fabulae*, 108).

138 Aristophanes *Vespae*, 1177.

139 Horace *Ars Poetica*, 340.

140 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 55.11; Lucian *Philopseudes*, 2; Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 11.23; Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae*, 8.102. The early Christian author Tertullian writes that stories about *Lamia's towers* were being told to small children (Tertullian *Adversus Valentinianos*, 3), and Plutarch mentions the story of Lamia who slept with her eyes in a jar (Plutarch *De curiositate*, 2 [= *Moralia*, 515d–516a]).

141 Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.3–5; Antoninus Liberalis *Metamorphoses*, 8.

142 Petronius *Satyrica*, 45.5; Horsfall 1989a, 82.

143 Scobie 1983, 21; Hansen 2002, 13.

144 Horace *Satirae*, 2.6.77.

145 Aristophanes *Vespae*, 1179; Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.5; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.28.

146 Petronius *Satyrica*, 63; Anderson 2006, 56–57.

147 Hansen 2002, 275.

148 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.1 & 7.27.4–5.

149 Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 3.10.11; Scobie 1979, 239. Pretzler 2005, 239; see also Anderson 2006, 31.

150 Hansen 1988, 1125.

151 Phaedrus *Fabulae* [*Appendix Perottina* 15].

152 Petronius *Satyrica*, 111–113. See the discussions in Hansen 1988, 1126; Anderson 1999, 54–57; Hansen 2002, 266–279.

153 Hansen 2002, 274 with references.

154 Hansen 2002, 274.

155 Hansen 2002, 266–267.

156 McGlathery 2001, 123.

Notes to Chapter 3

1 See e.g. Braund & Gill 2006 [1997]; Braund & Most 2003; Brunschwig & Nussbaum 1993; Caston & Kaster 2016; Harris 2001; Kaster 2005; Knuuttila 2006; Konstan & Rutter 2003; Konstan 2006; Lateiner & Spatharas 2016; Nussbaum 1996; Nussbaum 2005 [2001]; Sanders 2014; Sihvola & Engberg-Pedersen 1998; Sorabji 2002 [2000].

2 Gill 2006a [1997], 7–8; Wright 2006, 170–173; cf. Levene 2006 [1997], 129–131.

3.1

3 See e.g. Ekman & Friesen 1971. This idea has illustrious forerunners; Charles Darwin proposed it in his *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872) and Duchenne de Boulogne in his *The Mechanism of Human Facial Expression* (1862), discussed in Bourke 2005, 11–19. The physiological nature of emotions was also stressed by William James in his theory of emotion (1884).

4 For an overview of the first two scholarly traditions, see Lutz & White 1986. Rosaldo (1984) presents an early, influential formulation of the constructionist approach (see also Lutz 1988).

5 Solomon 1984; Nussbaum 2005 [2001].

6 Representatives include Leavitt 1996; Reddy 1997, 2001; Bourke 2003, 2005. However, Reddy (2001) moves more in the direction of cognitivist accounts (the third approach). The relation between feelings and emotions on the one hand, and experiences (Scruton 1986, 22), thought processes (Reddy 1997, 331) and social values (Stocker & Hegeman 1996) on the other, is also highly complex and is beyond the scope of this book.

7 Cf. Kaster 2005 on ancient Rome; Harris 2001 and Konstan 2006 on ancient Greece.

8 Lutz 1988, 55–76.

9 Lutz 1988, 8–11.

10 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.1.9, 1378a–2.2.27.1380a.

11 Konstan 2006, 77–81, 89.

12 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.3.3, 1380a–2.3.15, 1380b; Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.4.31, 1382a; Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.21, 1383b.

13 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.11, 1388b; Konstan 2006, 16, 224, 259.

14 Rosaldo 1984; Lutz 1988; Cf. Konstan 2006, 29.

15 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.2.23, 1379b; Stocker & Hegeman 1996, 266, 276.

16 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.14, 1383a; Stocker & Hegeman 1996, 257–258.

17 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.1.8, 1378a.

18 Konstan 2006, 21; Knuuttila 2006, 59.

19 Goldie (2000, 19) speaks of it as "feeling towards", including both an affective charge and an orientation to "objects in the world".

20 Rosaldo 1984, 143.

21 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 4.5, 1126a.

22 Reddy 1997, 330–332; Bourke 2003, 120.

23 Reddy 2001, 101–103. Reddy speaks of "first-person present tense emotion claims", referring to the verbalisation of emotion in the present, and "emotives", which are statements about emotion

that are influenced by what they refer to, i.e. feelings, while changing those feelings through the ways in which they are described, suppressed or intensified (Reddy 2001, 105; Reddy 1997, 331–340; cf. Bourke 2003, 120–121).

24 Raudvere (1993, 302) calls it the "emotional present tense".

3.2

25 See e.g. Izard & Ackerman 2000, 260. Damasio (1999, 54) makes the same statement for all emotions: they are "not a dispensable luxury".

26 Levenson, Ekman & Friesen 1990, 369–370, 379.

27 LeDoux 1996, 17–18; cf. Ekman 2004 [1977], 27–28 for a similar division into an automatic (unconscious) appraisal mechanism and an extended (conscious) appraisal mechanism.

28 Ekman 1999, 46.

29 Lutz 1988; Scruton 1986, 17, 41; Stattin 1990, 10.

30 See e.g. Öhman 2008.

31 Scruton 1986, 41–42.

32 Furedi 2006 [1997], 1.

33 Ahmed 2004, 71.

34 Robin 2004, 3–4.

35 Ahmed 2004, 4.

36 Ahmed 2004, 63.

37 For such a model, see Scruton 1986, 22.

38 Ahmed 2004, 4, 64, 72.

39 Haidt 2003.

40 Delumeau 1978, 15–17.

41 Bourke 2005, 214–215, 243–245.

42 Bourke 2005, 298–303, 306–307.

43 Bourke 2005, 3.

44 Stattin 1990, 157.

45 Bourke 2005, 2–3.

46 Delumeau 1978, 38–41.

47 Delumeau 1978, 29, 78–82 *et passim*.

48 Furedi 2005; Furedi 2006 [1997].

49 de Romilly 1956.

50 de Romilly 1958.

51 de Romilly 1958, 14–15.

52 de Romilly 1958, 20, 46.

53 de Romilly 1958, 100–103.

54 de Romilly 1958, 108–111; de Romilly 1956.

55 de Romilly 1956, 119–126. The existence of such a neat distinction in both Thucydides and ordinary Greek usage has been challenged by David Konstan (see Konstan 2006, 153–154).

56 Desmond 2006, 362, 364–365, 370.

57 Calabrese 2008, 4, esp. n. 4, 5, 10, 15–16, 21.

58 MacKay 1961, 308, 310, 315–316.

59 Fowler 2006 [1997]; Braund 2006 [1997]; Wright 2006 [1997].

60 Erskine 2006 [1997]; Wilson 2006 [1997]; Braund 2006 [1997].

61 Fantham 2006 [1997].

62 Levene 2006 [1997], 136–137.

63 Levene 2006 [1997], 140–143.

64 Levene 2006 [1997], 130–131; 148–149.

Notes to Chapter 4

1 For a good introduction to the Platonic philosophy of emotion, see Knuuttila 2006.

2 There is some debate on whether the Stoics actually advocated the extirpation of emotions in the strong sense (e.g. Nussbaum 1996, 389), or whether they rather advocated emotions of a qualitatively different sort than conventional emotions, which were perceived as noxious (e.g. Graver 2007). Graver's (2007) account has received a considerable following, yet even though we are inclined to concur with her conclusions, this technicality in itself bears no great import on our present study.

3 Gill 2006a [1997], 7.

4 Witness the many jokes about philosophers and intellectuals generally in the jokebook called *Philogelos*, *The Laughter-Lover*. These jokes are believed to have been collected by the compiler much in the manner of folklore collectors in the modern era (see Bremmer 1997).

4.1

5 Knuuttila 2006, 5, 24; Nussbaum 2006 [1986], 307–309.

6 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.1.8, 1378a; see also Plato *Philebus*, 47d–50d.

7 Knuuttila 2006, 27.

8 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.8, 1385b–1386b.

9 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5, 1382a–1383a.

10 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.1–3, 1382a.

11 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.1–3, 1382a.

12 Konstan 2006, 132–133.

13 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.12, 1382b.

14 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.13–15, 1382b–1383a.

15 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.8.12–23, 1117a.

16 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.18, 1383a.

17 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.3.10–11, 1380a; 2.12.9, 1389a; Konstan 2006, 46–47, 60, 87–88.

18 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.4.27–28, 1381a.

19 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.8.6–7, 1385b.

20 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.6.3, 1383b.

21 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 2.5, 1005b19–1006a13.

22 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 2.6, 1006b16–23.

23 Knuuttila 2006, 25–26; Nussbaum 1996, 93, 96.

24 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.12.5, 1389a; *ibid*, 2.13.7, 1389b.

25 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.14.3, 1390b.

26 Aristotle *Poetica*, 1449b27; 1453b2–4, 1453b 11–13; Halliwell 2009, 168–169, 171.

27 *Ibid*.

28 Aristotle *Poetica*, 1451a38–39.

29 It should be noted that we here use the word narrative to cover drama as well, although Aristotle himself makes a distinction between drama, which is enacted, and narrative, which is not (Aristotle *Poetica*, 1448a18–28). In the context of a discussion of plot construction, this distinction is of less relevance.

30 Aristotle *Poetica*, 1452a2–3.

31 Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1002–1046.

32 Aristotle *Poetica*, 1450a33–34; 1451a12–13; 1452a16–1452b1.

33 Aristotle *Rhetorica* 2.8, 1385b–1386b.

34 On error, see Aristotle *Poetica*, 1452b30–1453a16; Halliwell 2009, 212, 220; Sherman 1992; cf. Else 1957, 437–438.

35 Halliwell 2009, 208–215, 231–235.

36 Halliwell 2009, 56, 81; Halliwell 1992, 245; Woodruff 1992, 92. According to one line of interpretation, Aristotle agrees with Plato's conclusion that good tragedy somehow manages to incapacitate the intellect in the experience of the play, producing the emotions of pity and fear even though we do not believe in the reality of the events represented. Unlike Plato, however, Aristotle does not find this a cause for worry, since our emotional response to tragedy is also influenced by our moral character. If this is sound, we will not be misled by tragedy (see Woodruff 1992, 93–94).According to another, the pleasure afforded by tragedy is a variant of the general cognitive pleasure we take in all kinds of *mimêsis* (because to understand is most pleasant to all humans), and this pleasure actually rests on the fact that we simultaneously respond to what is being represented and to its the fictive character. These two elements are inseparable, and we would fail to experience pity and fear if we did not recognise their real-life basis, just as we would not see the pitiful and fearful in the events portrayed if we did not understand their fictive nature (the pitiful and the fearful are built into the events of the plot). It is the ordered unity of the plot that makes fictions more intelligible than real-life experiences, but in order to be intelligible, the plot must correspondingly draw on our pre-existing understanding of how the world works. We must be able to discriminate between various kinds of actions and characters, between innocence and guilt, between what merits and does not merit pity and fear, etc., i.e., we must bring our values to bear on the interpretation of the plot.

At the same time, fiction creates an imaginative space where this pre-understanding can be challenged by other points of view. Thus, the experience of tragedy requires a cognitive understanding of diverse aspects of the plot and their wider implications for the understanding of human existence, but these are themselves inherently laden

with emotion. That is why Aristotle describes pity and fear as both intrinsic to the plot-structure and as the emotions almost inevitably felt by the audience (Aristotle *Poetica*, 1452a2–3, 1452a8f). Consequently, fiction transforms what Aristotle regarded as purely painful emotions into aesthetic pleasure (see Halliwell 1992, 245–246, 250–254; cf. Golden 1992b, 19–22, 30–34).

A third approach is to give primacy to our recognition of the fictive status of tragedy. We experience aesthetic pleasure in viewing or reading a tragedy, but as a reaction to real-life suffering, pleasure is wholly inappropriate; the distinction between fiction and reality must be kept in mind. Rather, it is precisely the fictional character of tragedy that makes for its emotional impact: in the safe environment of the theatre, we temporarily allow ourselves to realise that we too could suffer the calamities the characters suffer. Tragedy provides an arena for imaginatively suffering the worst-case scenario: the collapse of familial and social bonds. (This interpretation strongly emphasises Aristotle's remark that the most effective tragedies describe crimes committed among kin [Aristotle *Poetica*, 1453a18–23].) This is a possibility most of us consider remote, but it is nevertheless one that rankles us, deep down. Tragedy shows us that even in these extreme circumstances, the world is rational (a successful plot requires this), and man can maintain his dignity. It is the experience of pity and fear, or the releasing of these emotions in this safe environment, that constitutes catharsis (see Lear 1992, 327, 333–335).

37 Aristotle *Poetica*, 1449b27.

38 Aristotle *Politica*, 1341b38–1342a15.

39 Bernays 1857, cited in Halliwell 2009, 353.

40 Golden 1992b, 37; Halliwell 2009, 191–192, 194. Others have appealed to a passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* which deals with the achievement of moral virtue by experiencing emotion at the right time and on the right occasion, with the right object, for the right reason and in the right manner (Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1106b16–23). In this version of catharsis, it provides ethical purification, helping us to respond more appropriately, in emotional terms, to events in real life. This is because tragedy is supposed to arouse pity and fear in proper measure, the most effective means of which is the error that rationalises the hero's downfall, and that forms the basis of properly felt pity and fear. Thus, good tragedy could be said to represent an exemplary case, a paradigm for the proper experience of emotion, and it does this, at least in part, in virtue of its plot-structure (see Janko 1992, 352; Halliwell 2009, 196–201).

Recent contributions to the theory of moral purification have tended to combine it with the theory of therapeutic purgation (see Janko 1992; Halliwell 2009). Two other trends in the interpretation of catharsis reject both these models. In the first, catharsis does not refer to any emotional effect of tragedy on the audience, but to the plot-structure itself. Catharsis remains a kind of purification, but it is a purification of the heinous act committed in tragedy, through a series of fearful and pitiful incidents, culminating in the element of recognition (see Else 1957, 229–231, 423–424, 439). In order to accommodate this hypothesis, the wording of Aristotle's definition of tragedy has to be reinterpreted. On this view, Aristotle is not speaking of emotions at all (*tôn toioutôn pathêmatôn*) but of events (a meaning the word has in another passage in the *Poetics*), nor of pity and fear (*eleou kai phobou*) (Aristotle *Poetica*, 1449b27) but of pitiful and fearful incidents (the wording should be taken to imply *eleeinôn kai phoberôn*). In the latest proposal of this theory, catharsis is explicated as the resolution or *dénouement* of the tragic plot, the clarification of its pitiful and fearful incidents (see Nehamas 1992, 306–308).

It has also been suggested that the catharsis of the tragic plot is a prerequisite for the psychological catharsis of the audience: it is through the resolution of the plot that its essential unity can be perceived, allowing the audience to view it as a harmonious whole (see Rorty 1992, 14).

41 It also points to the antecedents of such an intellectual catharsis in Plato's ideas about the catharsis of the soul, which is

achieved through philosophical cross-examination, removing the ignorance that consists in believing one has knowledge one does not in fact possess; see Plato *Sophista*, 226e–231b; Golden 1992b, 16–24.

42 Golden 1992b, 26–27, 30–31.

43 Even those who describe themselves as anti-cognitivist, such as Lear 1992, 324, do this.

44 Cognitive and emotional clarification: Nussbaum 2006a [1986], 389–391.

45 Belfiore 1992, 260–290.

46 Belfiore 1992, 355–358.

47 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8.

4.2

48 Epicurus *Epistula ad Menoeceum*, 128.

49 On Diogenes of Oenoanda, see Erler 2009, 54–59.

50 Diogenes Oenoandensis frag. 35.2 Smith.

51 Konstan 2008, 47–49.

52 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 2.55–61.

53 Konstan 2008, 49, 53.

54 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.14–16, 3.161–162, 3.325–330; Epicurus *Epistula ad Menoeceum* 10.124–127; Epicurus *Kuriai doxai*, 2; cf. Philodemus *De morte*, 4.8.13–20.

55 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.830–842, 862–869; cf. Philodemus *De morte*, 4.1.2–12. This aspect of Epicurean doctrine has been very controversial in the modern philosophical debate on the fear of death. Many critics are particularly opposed to the idea that death is not a harm to the person who dies, appealing to the way in which death might interrupt the individual's plans and projects, leaving them unfinished and hence ultimately meaningless (Nussbaum 1996, 207–210; Warren 2008, 31, 116–122). Armstrong (2004, 35) argues that Philodemus actually addresses these points in *De morte*, making much of the modern discussion null and void.

56 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.870–893; Warren 2008, 20–23.

57 It has indeed been suggested that this work was aimed at a mixed audience, not just of Epicureans but of philosophers belonging to other schools and of laypersons including both men and women (see Armstrong 2004, 20, 31).

58 Philodemus *De morte*, 12.2–12.7, 12.31–13.13, 13.36–15.7; Warren 2008, 143–145, 147; Armstrong 2004, 37–38.

59 Philodemus *De morte*, 22.9–16, 24.5–25.10, 25.37–26.10; Armstrong 2004, 40–41.

60 Philodemus *De morte*, 31.30–32.31.

61 Philodemus *De morte*, 37.18–38.25; Armstrong 2004, 45.

62 Philodemus *De dis*, 1.16.18ff, 1.24.20–34 Diels; Warren 2009, 236–237.

63 Philodemus *De dis*, 1.16.18ff, 1.24.20–34 Diels; Epicurus *Epistula ad Pythoclem*, 85; *Epistula ad Herodotum*, 36; Warren 2009, 236–237.

64 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.310–313.

65 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.322; O'Keefe 2009, 150.

66 Philodemus *De ira*, 37.24–27, 38.1–4; Annas 1994, 192–193; Procopé 1998, 181.

67 Usener 221; Nussbaum 1996, 127.

68 Philodemus *De ira*, 45.33–37; Tsouna 2009, 251.

69 Epicurus *Kuriai doxai*, 11–12.

70 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.33, 3.76, 5.74. Death of Epicurus: Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 10.22; Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, 2.30.96. Some of his philosophical opponents were quite unimpressed by this story. Plutarch remarks in *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum*, 18 [= *Moralia*, 1099e]: "But none of us will put faith in Epicurus' [statement] that, while dying in the greatest pains and suffering, he was sent on ahead by the memory of pleasures he had previously enjoyed …".

71 Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, 1.17.57.

72 Lucretius *De rerum natura* 1063–1064; Procopé 1998, 185. As suggested by what follows in Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1065–1067: "… and to sow the collected liquid into any bodies, and not keep it turned to the love of one, thus reserving care and certain pain for oneself".

73 Philodemus *De morte* 34.15–34.38; Tsouna 2009, 259.

74 Lucretius *De rerum natura* 4.1153–1169; Tsouna 2009, 259–260. Nussbaum 1996, 174–176 observes that these exaggerated descriptions of mistresses derive from poetry, and thus that men have been culturally taught to view the objects of their love in this way.

75 Tsouna 2007, 86–87.

76 Philodemus *De ira*, 1.9–10, 1.21–23, 7.13–18; Procopé 1998, 184–186; Tsouna 2009, 262.

77 Philodemus *De ira*, 8.22–9.33.

78 Philodemus *De ira*, 12.21–13.27.

79 Tsouna 2009, 262–263.

4.3

80 Sedley 2009, 7. The distinctive character of Stoic philosophy lies in its high degree of internal consistency in comparison to other schools, and the theory of emotion cannot really be understood without reference to this broader framework; Inwood 2012, however, cautions against overemphasising this unity.

81 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.110; Stobaeus *Eclogae*, 2.88.8–10 = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 1.205; Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.16.11; 4.21.47 = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 1.205. These aspects of the Stoic theory of emotion are the only ones unanimously ascribed to Zeno in the more recent scholarly literature (see Brennan 1998, 59–60; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 34).

82 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.111–114; *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.391.

83 Stobaeus *Eclogae*, 2.88.11–12 Wachsmuth = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 1.206. Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.5.6, p. 260 de Lacy.

84 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* 1.209; for Aristotle cf. above. The controversy is partly due to the nature of an important source in this context, Galen's (AD 129–199/216) *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*. In this work, Galen is concerned to refute the Stoic philosophy of emotion and the soul as represented by Chrysippus in favour of a Platonic model, and many scholars seriously doubt his reliability as a reporter of Chrysippan doctrine, either because of suspected dishonesty (Annas 1994, 108–109; cf. 118), deliberate misrepresentation (Gill 1998), or incomprehension (Cooper 1998, 72–74). Others have attempted to at least partially vindicate him, arguing that he might be a polemicist, but an intelligent and skilful one unlikely to undermine his own position by succumbing to gross and indiscriminate criticism of things he does not understand (Sorabji 2002 [2000], 99–108).

85 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.11–12.

86 Stobaeus *Eclogae* 2.90.11–16 Wachsmuth; Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.61; 3.68; 3.76 (explicitly associating Chrysippus with this position); 4.14; cf. Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.4.1; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 29–33; Knuuttila 2006, 53.

87 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 3.3, 3.8; Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.101–105; Stobaeus *Eclogae*, 2.79–80 Wachsmuth.

88 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.76–77.

89 Brennan 1998, 31–32; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 169–170; Knuuttila 2006, 59–60, 68.

90 Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.2.1; Inwood 1993, 166, 174–176.

91 Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.2.2, 2.4.1. The conception of the three stages of emotion seems to be Seneca's invention; at any rate, his is the first extant treatment of all three, though earlier authors anticipate some of his arguments, notably Aristotle and Cicero concerning first movements, and Chrysippus regarding the third. Aristotle recognised the existence of physiological first movements; Aristotle said that the heart could be stirred by an impression independent from the commands of the intellect, and he would concede that physical movements could precede emotion (see Aristotle *De motu animalium*, 11.703b5–11; Aristotle *De anima*, 1.1.403a22). Galen, though a later author than Seneca, viewed the contractions of the soul described by Chrysippus as the physiological

sensation of yellow bile flowing down into the stomach, and Cicero makes mention of bites and little contractions of the mind (*morsus et contractiunculae animi*) which had a certain degree of independence from judgements, but they do not appear to precede them (see Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.82–83; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 61–63, 66–72; Inwood 1993, 179–182). The idea of third movements probably has its roots in Chrysippus' psychology. He compared an individual surrendering to the mistaken judgements of emotion to a runner who is unable to stop once he has gathered momentum, and said that such a person was being carried away (*ekpheromenos*) (see Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.6.35, pp. 276–278 de Lacy; 4.2.15–18, pp. 240–242 de Lacy). However, Chrysippus does not seem to have linked these points of view, as Seneca does. For Seneca's development of this thesis by differentiating two stages of the process of judgement in emotion serves to explain how emotions could be both rational and unreasonable. According to Seneca, they are rational as second movements, constituted as they are by the judgement that it is appropriate to be avenged, but unreasonable as third movements, when even the consideration of the appropriateness of retaliation becomes irrelevant. It has therefore been suggested that Seneca advanced his theory expressly to defend Chrysippus from charges of inconsistency when he characterised emotion as both rational and without reason or judgement (see Sorabji 2002, 61–63).

92 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 116; cf. Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.12–14, translating them as *gaudium*, *voluntas* and *cautio* respectively.

93 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.14; Brennan 1998, 35; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 49–50.

94 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.112–113.

95 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.409; cf. Stobaeus *Eclogae,* 2.92.1–6 Wachsmuth, where superstition and fright (the latter here defined as the fear of the terrible) supplement the list, otherwise consisting of shrinking, anguish, consternation, shame, alarm and terror.

96 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.16; 4.19. There is a lacuna in the manuscripts here, and the definition of shame has been supplied from that of terror.

97 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.432; Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.116; Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.13; Sorabji 2002 [2000], 48–49.

98 Cicero mentions avarice, thirst for glory and love of women, and of the latter hatred of women, or of the entire human race; see Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.23–27.

99 See also Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.6.27, p. 274 de Lacy.

100 Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 116.1–6; cf. 85.8–10; Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 1.7.2–3, 1.8.2–3.

101 Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.2.2; Inwood 1993, 178–179.

102 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.32; Knuuttila 2006, 7–73.

103 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 1.135. The prominent role assigned to *pneuma* in Stoic theory was an influence from contemporary Hellenistic medicine, where it was a crucial concept used to explain the functioning of the arterial system and the nervous system as well as higher psychological functions. The Stoics adopted the notion of *pneuma* as a kind of centralised system as it could account for both the physiology and psychology of human beings (and other living creatures too), and the seat of this centralised system governing the other parts of the body and soul was said to be the heart (see *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 2.879; Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 1.6.3, p. 78 de Lacy; 2.3.4–5, p. 110 de Lacy; Annas 1994, 20–26, 53, 69; Knuuttila 2006, 47–48).

104 The other parts of the soul, in addition to the governing part, were the five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch), voice and reproduction (see *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 2.827, 2.836).

105 See Stobaeus *Eclogae*, 1.368–369 Wachsmuth = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 2.826.

106 Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.6.1–10, pp. 270–272 de Lacy; Annas 1994, 106–107.

107 Cicero identified himself as a New Academic, not a Stoic. This adherence had no other implication in terms of orthodoxy than that the best account could be embraced regardless of its origin.

108 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3. 23–25; White 1995, 226–231.

109 White 1995, 232–233. Cicero's principal discussion of the emotions and their therapy is divided into two, the first dealing with grief – the worst kind of affliction there is (Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, book 3) – and the second with the emotions in general (Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, book 4). Grief is the worst of all kinds of distress, which in turn is the worst of the four principal emotions (see Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.27, 3.81). In many ways, these discussions overlap, and it is quite uncalled for to make any sharp distinctions between arguments pertaining to grief and ones pertaining to the other emotions. Grief functions as a paragon of the painfulness of the emotions, and is an appropriate point of entry into the realm of the other emotions (see Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.83).

110 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.28–29; Long 1986, 8.

111 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.30.

112 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.31, 3.52; see also Graver 2002, 96–99.

113 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.32–34; White 1995, 238.

114 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.56–57, 3.77.

115 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.56–57, 3.60; White 1995, 241–242.

116 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.70–71.

117 Graver 2002, 114–116.

118 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.79, 4.59–60.

119 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.64.

120 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.82.

121 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.38–42, 4.57.

122 Cicero argues at length against this doctrine of moderation (*metriopatheia*), which was associated with the Peripatetics, and he probably imputed it to Aristotle himself, though this is an erroneous interpretation of Aristotle's position. (It is an error he shares with many others, since Aristotle's works were lost between the 3rd and 1st centuries BC.) Cicero also rejects the Peripatetics' claim that emotions could be useful in human life; fear, for example, was supposed to give people regard for their lives by making them fear the laws and the magistrates, and poverty, ignominy, death and pain. Cicero thinks that an ambition to act appropriately is a far better motivation for action than emotion, which is too difficult to control (see Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 4.43–46; Graver 2002, 163–165, 167–169; on Cicero's knowledge of Plato and Aristotle, see Long 1995; on his knowledge of Aristotle and the Peripatos, see Fortenbaugh & Steinmetz 1989, esp. Classen 1989 on *Tusculanae disputationes*; Gill 2006a [1997], 6–7).

123 Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 136.

124 Woodruff 1992, 76; cf. Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 126–128.

125 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 1.28.31–33; Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 136–139.

126 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 1.4.23–26.

127 Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 139–141.

Notes to Chapter 5

1 The term "reproductive demons" is used by Sarah Iles Johnston (1994). In later publications (Johnston 1999), however, she has used the Greek word *aorai* "restless female souls", but this is less applicable in our context. We have chosen to predominantly employ the word demon in regard to the creatures *lamia*, *gellô* and *mormô*, whereas in the ancient sources various words were used, such as Greek *daimon* "demon", *thêrion* "savage beast", *phantasma* "phantom", or *phasma* "ghost" or "monster".

2 Lawson 1964 [1910], 180; Scobie 1978, 76 n. 18.

3 Lawson 1964 [1910], 177–178.

4 Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus*, ch. 3–8 [Hartnup 2004, chs. 4–6]; Lawson 1964 [1910], 177; Johnston 1994, 153–154, n. 13.

5 Lawson 1964 [1910], 171–184; Blum & Blum 1970, 115, 119. Italy: Douglas 2010 [1911], ch. 6.

6 For a recent book-length discussion, see Patera 2015.

7 Bremmer (1983, 101–102) regards them as pedagogical fictions, with the possible exception of *gellô*; much earlier, Rohde (1898, 410–411) termed the stories *Kindermärchen*; in *RE* (s.v. "Mormo", col. 310), *mormô* is labelled as *Kinderschreck*, and in *RE* (s.v. "Lamia", col. 544), *lamia* is referred to as a kind of *Kinderschreck* and *Ammenspuk*, i.e., bogeys in stories told by adults – including nurses – to make children obedient.

8 Xenophon *Hellenica*, 4.4.17; Plato *Crito*, 46c; Erinna *The Distaff*, Loeb Select Papyri 3, no 120; Theocritus *Idyllia*, 15.40; Scholia in Theocritum *Idyllia*, 15.40a; Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.5; Plutarch *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*, 15 [= *Moralia*, 1040b]; Plutarch *De liberis educandis*, 5 [= *Moralia*, 3f]; Babrius *Fabulae*, 16.1–2; Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 55.11; Lucian *Philopseudes*, 2; Scholia in Aelium Aristidem, p. 42 Dindorf; Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 11.23; Tertullian *Adversus Valentinianos*, 3; Libanius *Orationes*, 30.38 & 33.42.17.

9 Johnston 1994, 140–141; Vermeule 1977, 296.

5.1

10 Here we refer to the individual demons, hence the capitalised names (see the discussion below, Chapter 5.2).

11 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 11.39.232–233.

12 Plautus *Pseudolus*, 819–821.

13 McDonough 1997, 326.

14 Johnston 1995, 371; cf. Raudvere 1993.

15 Michael Psellus apud Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus* ch. 3, p. 118. Others have interpreted it in a similar fashion; Maria Patera (2015, 155) advances both Ovid and Pliny the Elder as precursors of the Byzantine belief.

16 Ovid *Fasti*, 6.131–140, 143–168.

17 *OCD*, s.v. "Harpyiae, Harpies".

18 Ovid *Fasti*, 6.127–130.

19 McDonough 1997, 333–336. McDonough suggests a close parallel, if not a historical connection, between a similar Babylonian ritual directed at Lamashtu, the bane of infants, pregnant women and young mothers, and the ritual described by Ovid. In ancient Sparta, however, the celebration of the Korythalia included the killing of a piglet by nurses on behalf of their male nurslings (see Calame 1977, 298). For scapegoat rituals in ancient Greece, with some Roman and Middle-Eastern parallels, see discussion in Bremmer 1983.

20 McDonough 1997, 330–333. The discussion is based on his excellent analysis.

21 Ogle 1911, 254, 262.

22 Stark 2006, 152, 154.

23 Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 4.30.

24 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 84–157.

25 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.384–388.

26 See Ogle 1911, 258.

27 McDonough 1997, 331–333.

28 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 2.21–30.

29 Petronius *Satyrica*, 63.

30 Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus* ch. 8, p. 133 (Greek), p. 135 (Latin translation). For a discussion of St. Sisinnius' Prayer in later Greek literary and oral tradition, see e.g. Passalis 2014.

31 Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus* ch. 8, p. 134 (Greek), p. 136 (Latin translation).

32 Perdrizet 1922, 19–20.

33 Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus* ch. 8, p. 117–118 (Greek), p. 131 (Latin translation). These names are given in another variant of the story cited earlier in Allatius' text.

5.2

34 Isidore of Seville (*c.* AD 560–636) states: "Lamias, whom the tales tell commonly snatch away infants (*infantes corripere*) and lacerate them (*laniare solitas*), are specially named after 'laceration' (*a laniando specialiter dictas*)" (*Etymologiae,* 8.11.102).

35 *Daremberg-Saglio*, s.v. "Lamia", p. 908; Johnston 1999, 174. It has also been

suggested that the name Lamia is derived from the Sumerian-Akkadian Lamashtu (Burkert 1984, 80–81).

36 *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* Euripides frag. 922 [= frag. 472m] = Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.6.

37 Aristophanes *Vespae*, 1035.

38 Smith 1978, 428.

39 Aristotle *De generatione animalium*, 746b7–13; Anaxilas *Hyakinthos Pornoboskos*, frag. 27 = *Poetae Comici Graeci* 2.292 = Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 14.18.10–12; Romm 1994, 88–91; Campbell 2006, 112–113.

40 Smith 1978, 429–430; Johnston 1995, 362–364.

41 Duris of Samos fragment 35 = Scholia in Aristophanem *Vespae*, 1030.

42 See e.g. Hesychius *Lexicon*, s.v. "Λάμια"; *Suda*, s.v. "Λαμία"; Scholia in Aelium Aristidem, p. 42 Dindorf.

43 Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.3–5.

44 Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.5–6.

45 Plutarch *De curiositate*, 2 [= *Moralia,* 515f–516a].

46 Heraclitus paradoxographus *De incredibilibus*, 34 Stern.

47 Antoninus Liberalis *Metamorphoses*, 8. Ogden (2013, 183) suggests Lamia-Sybaris was turned into the spring mentioned in the story, though this is not quite made explicit.

48 As suggested by *Daremberg-Saglio*, s.v. "Lamia", p. 908.

49 Schmidt 1871, 141–142.

50 Lawson 1964 [1910], 175.

51 von Hahn 1918, 17–25; see also von Hahn 1918, 181–184.

52 This was the case in the Doxario region, studied by Richard and Eva Blum in the 1960s (see Blum & Blum 1970, 118–119). One of their informants enigmatically stated that there was no longer any need for *lamiai*, "because we are lamias ourselves" (see Blum & Blum 1970, 119). Perhaps this refers to perceived moral decline.

53 Lawson 1964 [1910], 146; Blum & Blum 1970, 115.

5.3

54 Johnston 1995, 368; Johnston 1999, 174. Burkert suggested that the name Gellô is derived from the Sumerian-Akkadian Gallû (Burkert 1984, 80–81).

55 Zenobius *Proverbia*, 3.3 = Sappho fr. 178 Campbell.

56 See also Hesychius *Lexicon*, s.v. "Γελλώ"; *Suda*, s.v. "Γελλοῦς παιδοφιλωτέρα".

57 Johnston 1995, 366–370.

58 *Cyranides*, 2.40.38–39. In modern Greece, *gellouda* is the name of a disease affecting small children, caused by the evil eye of *gelloudes* (see Passalis 2014, 125–126).

59 Michael Psellus apud Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus* ch. 3, p. 117–118.

60 Johnston 1995, 366, especially n. 12; D. West 1991.

61 Damigeron-Evax 31 (pregnant women and infants), 34.23–24, 27–28 (infants and women in labour); *Orphei lithica kerygmata*, 2.3–4 (nursing women with lactation difficulties and infants).

62 Johnston 1994, 142; *RE*, s.v. "Mormo". The word *mormô* is related to *formido*, a Latin word for fear.

63 Johnston 1999, 174.

64 Scholia in Aelium Aristidem, p. 42 Dindorf.

65 Sarah Iles Johnston (1997, especially 67–68) suggests that the Corinthian Medea, to be distinguished from the Colchian Medea of myth, was originally construed in the manner of a reproductive demon, and when Corinthian Medea and Colchian Medea later fused into the mythic Medea we know today, her nature as a reproductive demon no longer fit into the picture. Consequently, this aspect of Corinthian Medea came to be identified with *mormô*.

66 Theocritus *Idyllia*, 15.40.

67 Xenophon *Hellenica*, 4.4.17; for another reference to *mormô* as a bogey, see Aristophanes *Pax*, 474.

68 Libanius *Orationes*, 33.42.

69 Schmidt 1871, 141. By the modern period, *mormô* had turned into a neuter noun, perhaps through influence from *mormolukeion*, which is neuter.

70 Plato *Phaedo*, 77e.

71 Johnston 1999, 180–183.

72 Scholia in Aelium Aristidem, p. 42 Dindorf.

73 Hesychius *Lexicon,* s.v. "μορμόγας".

74 Scholia in Theocritum *Idyllia*, 15.40c.

75 Scholia in Theocritum *Idyllia*, 15.40c.

76 Douglas 2010 (1911), 77; Johnston 1994, 141.

5.4

77 Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 20.41.3–5. *Orphei lithica*, 224–225.

78 Dickie 1975, 384–388.

79 Lattimore 1962, 148; Statius *Silvae*, 4.8.16–17; Statius *Thebaid*, 2.14–16.

80 *Anthologia Latina*, 636.18; cf. Horace *Epistulae*, 1.12.58f.

81 Petronius *Satyrica*, frag. 25.

82 Homer *Odyssea*, 11.576–581.

83 Plato *Timaeus*, 71a–b.

84 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 2.760, 2.775, 2.780, 2.784, 2.807; Horace *Epistulae*, 1.2.57–59; Horace *Satirae*, 1.110f.; *Anthologia Latina*, 636.11.

85 *Anthologia Latina*, 636.1–3.

86 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 2.800–801.

87 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 2.775; see also *Anthologia Latina*, 636.10–11; Dunbabin & Dickie 1983, 15–16.

88 Silius Italicus *Punica*, 13.584; see also Claudian *In Rufinum*, 1.32f.; Libanius *Orationes*, 30.18.

89 Eunapius *Vitae sophistarum*, 6.2.3.

90 For the others – Gellô in particular – the evidence from the Byzantine era is much richer, see especially Leo Allatius *De Graecorum hodie quorundam opinationibus*, ch. 3–8.

91 Dickie 1975, 381.

92 McDonough 1997, 320.

93 The notion of reproductive demons as personifications of envy is suggested by Johnston (1999, 193), but is not explored further.

94 Kaster 2003, 253–254.

95 See, for example, Plutarch *Quomodo quis suos in virtute sentiat profectus*, 14 [= *Moralia*, 84c].

96 Kaster 2005, 86–89.

97 Kaster 2005, 89.

98 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 1386b39–1387a3; Isocrates *Orationes* [Nicocles], 3.60; Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 5.1120–32; Cicero *Post reditum ad populum*, 21; Ovid *Metamorphoses,* 2.763; Pseudo-Sallust *Epistulae*, 2.8.6f.; Seneca the Younger *Dialogi*, 9.2.6–11; Plutarch *De capienda ex inimicis utilitate*, 10 [= *Moralia*, 92a–d]; Plutarch *Quomodo quis suos in virtute sentiat profectus*, 14 [= *Moralia*, 84c]; for discussion, see Dickie 1975, 378–381.

99 Ovid *Epistulae ex Ponto*, 3.3.101.

100 *Cyranides*, 2.40.37.

101 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5.1–3, 1382a.

102 In this context the work of Mark Golden is particularly important (Golden 1988); see also the discussions in: Garnsey 1991, 49–52; Parkin 1992, 95; d'Ambra 2007, 340, 351; Carroll 2012, 46–47; Parkin 2013, 40–44.

103 Johnston 1994, 100–101; Johnston 1999, 38.

104 Dunbabin & Dickie 1983, 10, and n. 11 for references.

105 This is the argument of Johnston 1999, 196–198.

106 Amber was thought by some to be a liquid produced by the rays of the Sun, while yet others thought it to be the tears shed after Phaeton the son of the Sun had died, struck by a thunderbolt sent by Zeus (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 37.9.31 & 36). Beyond the magical properties related to the colour, there were also other aspects that added to its importance. Its electrostatic properties made it attract things like leaves, and amber was therefore compared with magnets (Theophrastus *De lapidibus*, 5.28; Theophrastus *Historia plantarum*, 9.18; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 37.9.48). It was thought to protect babies against harms, and also to have a number of medicinal uses (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis historia*, 37.12.50).

107 Pliny the Elder writes that the gemstone galactite had the colour of milk, and rubbed between the fingers it would give off a scent of milk; accordingly it was thought to ensure that wet-nurses had plenty of milk (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 37.59.162; see also: Bonner 1946, 28; Hildburgh 1951, 431). Other sources state that it soothed anger, protected babies against the threats

of envy and ill health (Damigeron-Evax, 34; *Orphei lithica kerygmata* 2.4; Johnston 1995, 384). The examples of both amber and galactite are clearly cases of sympathetic magic.

5.5

108 Hopkins 1965–66, 141; Dixon 1992, 62, 67; Treggiari 1994, 311; Gardner 1999, 143; Krause 2011, 623.

109 Cicero *De officiis*, 1.17.54; Treggiari 1991b, 57–58.

110 Saller 1984, 342.

111 See, for instance, Catullus *Carmina*, 61.204–208.

112 Harlow & Laurence 2002, 40.

113 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 56.4–6. The text is corrupt at the end of the quote, as *en polemôi* is repeated twice. We have translated it as belonging to "fall into the hands of strangers"; some read *en loimôi* "as in pestilence", to achieve symmetry in the "pass away into extinction" clause.

114 Philodemus *De morte*, 24.5–24.17.

115 For examples of legacy-hunting, see particularly Pliny the Younger's comments on the activities of Marcus Aquilius Regulus (Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 2.20.4.2).

116 Harlow & Laurence 2002, 130–131.

117 Dixon 1992, 101; Thomas 1996, 232; Harlow & Laurence 2002, 39.

118 Saller 1991a, 23.

119 Dixon 1992, 25; Hanson 1999, 25; Harlow & Laurence 2002, 119.

120 Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 6.pf.2.

121 Over the years the demography of ancient Rome has been much debated, see for instance: Hopkins 1966–67; Frier 1982; Frier 1983; Parkin 1992; Frier 1999; Frier 2000; Scheidel 2001a; Scheidel 2001b. Different categories of evidence – written sources, including both legal and literary texts (e.g. Frier 1982; Parkin 2013, 45); epigraphical material, in particular funerary inscriptions (e.g. Saller & Shaw 1984; Laes 2007), and skeletal remains (e.g. Frier 1983; Pilkington 2013) – form the source material for these calculations. The actual estimates, however, are based on an analogy with much later periods, using different demographic models (see the discussions in: Scheidel 2001b, 3; Laes 2011, 24). The levels of the estimated mortality differ and Walter Scheidel (Scheidel 2001b) has criticised Bruce Frier of presenting too negative a view of infant and child mortality (Frier 1982, esp. p. 245, table 5; Frier 1983; Frier 1999; Frier 2000). Although the estimates vary, it is clear that the levels of mortality were high or very high.

122 Golden 1988, 155; Harlow & Laurence 2002, 43.

123 The estimated number of births – five to six – is based on the very high levels of infant and child mortality advocated by most scholars (see Hanson 1999, 33). Following Scheidel's lower estimates of mortality, however, the number of children a woman would have had to give birth to in order to replace herself and her spouse was lower: below four (Scheidel 2001b, 26). The number of pregnancies and births a woman had to go through would in turn have had an effect on maternal mortality, higher numbers would have resulted in higher mortality.

124 Ariès 1960.

125 Golden 1988, 154–156.

126 Cf. Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 54.16.7; Shaw 1987, 33, 43–44 (girls); Saller 1987, 25–30 (men); see also: Treggiari 1991b, 39–43.

127 Saller 1987, 33, table 2; Hin 2007, 4.

128 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 1.20; Amundsen & Diers 1969.

129 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 1.33.

130 Plutarch *Lycurgus et Numa*, 4 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 78.2]; Cohen 1991, 113.

131 Todman 2007, 84.

132 Infertility was regarded as a just cause for divorce (*Digesta*, 24.1.60); however, fertility was not a necessary prerequisite for being able to enter marriage (Gardner 1999, 143).

133 Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Antiquitates Romanae*, 2.25.6–7; Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae*, 14 [= *Moralia*, 267c]; Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 4.3.2; Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 2.1.4.

134 Harlow & Laurence 2002, 86–87.

135 That such considerations were important is reflected in the so-called *Laudatio Turiae*, a long inscription praising the virtues of an unknown upper-class woman: "Distrustful of your fertility [and pained] at my childlessness, you spoke of [divorce], so that I should not – by keeping you in marriage – give up the hope of having children and be [unfortunate] because of this. You would relinquish the household to another [woman's] fertility, with no other intention than of personally seeking and preparing for me a state of life that was worthy and typical of the harmony experienced between us, and you affirmed that you would regard the children-to-be as [common], and [as] your own […]" (*Laudatio Turiae* column 2, lines 31–36). Since parts of the inscription resemble an account given of a woman named Turia in the written sources, the inscription was traditionally thought to be hers (see *OCD*, s.v. "'Laudatio Turiae'").

5.6

136 Johnston 1999, ix.

137 Johnston 1999, 194–195.

138 Madigan 2011, 3. The term itself was coined in 1989, see *ibid*, but the international breakthrough came in 1990 with the publication of the book *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*.

139 *Cyranides*, 2.40.37.

140 *RE*, s.v. "Mormo".

141 He was not a philosopher by profession, but in his home district in Lycia (in modern Turkey) he erected an inscription of Epicurean doctrine, which is an important source for students of Epicurean philosophy. This inscription covers parts of a *stoa*, i.e., an open colonnade, which was 80 metres long, so there was ample room for expounding doctrine (Diogenes Oenoandensis, frag. 35.2 Smith).

142 Konstan 2008, 49, 53.

143 Johnston 1999, 191–199; Tomm 1993, 69.

144 White & Epston 1990, 14–16, 18–27.

145 Payne 2010 [2006], 42.

146 White & Epston 1990, 46; White 2007, 42.

147 White 2007, 41–42.

148 Scobie 1983, 83. Dunbabin & Dickie 1983, 10, esp. n. 11.

149 Cf. Madigan 2009, 106.

150 Long 1986, 8; Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.28–29.

151 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.30.

152 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.34, 3.56–58, 3.60, 3.77; White 1995, 241–242.

153 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.70–71.

154 Irvine 2009, 68–70, 81–82. Irvine prefers the term "negative visualization", no doubt because his book is intended for a wide audience, and "negative visualization" is more descriptive to the modern ear than "pre-rehearsal".

Notes to Chapter 6

1 McDonough 1997, 322.

2 Bradley 1992; Dasen 2011, 307; Dixon 1988, 141–146; Dixon 1992, 8; on male childminders, see Bradley 1985; Dixon 1988, 149–155.

3 For the irrationalism of the ape, as of other animals, see Chapter 6.1.

4 Unlike the other stories discussed in this chapter, the story of Hypsipyle and Opheltes/Archemorus is a well-attested one, and like the stories about Lamia, it has its origins in the Greek world, but appealed to the Roman imagination as well; the most extensive extant treatment is to be found in the work of a Roman poet, Statius (AD 45/early 50s –*c*. 96). The earliest tentative allusion to some form of the narrative is to be found in a fragment of Simonides (556/53–468/65 BC), in which "they" weep for the milk-sucking baby of a violet-crowned mother as it breathes out its sweet soul; this is interpreted as a reference to Archemorus by the author in which the fragment is preserved (Simonides frag. 553 *Poetae Melici Graeci* = Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 9.396e).

5 See also Bacchylides 9.10–17; Euripides *Hypsipyle*; Aeschylus *Nemea* = *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 3, frag. 149 Radt. These works are usefully listed and discussed in Soerink (2014), who also covers the Roman material.

6 See Statius *Thebais*, 5.499–555; Hyginus *Fabulae*, 74.1–3.

7 In Euripides' tragedy *Hypsipyle*, composed between 412 and 406 BC, the story of Opheltes was probably combined with that of Hypsipyle for the first time (Soerink 2014, 9). Hypsipyle used to be the queen of Lemnos, but after the Lemnian women had killed all menfolk on the island and Hypsipyle refused to slay her own father, she escaped to avoid retribution by her former underlings and was captured and sold into slavery by pirates. The king and queen of Nemea, Lycurgus and Eurydice, became her owners, and she was entrusted with the care of their infant son Opheltes. When the Seven against Thebes pass through Nemea on their way to Thebes, the seer Amphiaraus needs water for a sacrifice. Hypsipyle shows him the way to a spring, where Opheltes is killed by a snake. Opheltes' mother wants to impose capital punishment on Hypsipyle, but is finally dissuaded by Amphiaraus, who perceives the infant's death as an omen, and he is renamed Archemorus ("the beginning of doom") (Euripides *Hypsipyle*, frags. 757 & 759a).

8 In a victory ode by Simonides' nephew Bacchylides (*c*. 520–450 BC), the basic outline of Archemorus' story can be discerned: the Argive heroes constituting the Seven against Thebes are said to be the first to compete in the athletic games, the Nemean ones, held in honour of Archemorus, who was killed by a monstrous yellow-eyed snake as a bad omen for the Seven's expedition (Bacchylides, 9.10–17). The Nemean Games were one of the four Panhellenic games, alongside the well-known Olympic Games, and were held every second year (Kyle 2015, 132, 138–139).

9 Pache 2004 argues for the story's function as an expression of parental fears and guilt.

6.1

10 *OCD*, s.v. "Aelian (Claudius Aelianus)". Aelian *De natura animalium*, 7.21.

11 For the narratological concept of "evaluation", see Labov 1972, 366–375.

12 On swaddling and bathing, see Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.6a.64–178; 2.12; 2.15; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 7.3; Plutarch *De liberis educandis*, 5 [= *Moralia,* 3e]; Galen *De sanitate tuenda*, 1.7; Garnsey 1991, 56–57; Rawson 2003, 121.

13 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.7.25–28.

14 Brunvand 2003, 65–66.

15 af Klintberg 2001, 141.

16 af Klintberg 2001, 140–141.

17 Plautus *Poenulus*, 1074; Galen *De usu partium*, 3.16 (Kühn III, p. 264); Philostratus *Imagines*, 2.17.13. Pindar *Pythian*, 2.72–73 is sometimes adduced as evidence for children keeping pet apes and thinking them beautiful (see McDermott 1938, 132), but this interpretation has been questioned in Hubbard 1990, who regards the children's cry of "beautiful one … beautiful one" as a taunt.

18 Theophrastus *Characteres*, 21; Dinarchus, frag. 17 (*Oratores Attici* Müller II, p. 455); Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum*, 6.1.25.

19 Lucian *Piscator*, 36; Lucian *Apologia*, 5; Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.34.76.

20 Phaedrus *Fabulae*, 3.4.

21 McDermott 1938, 148.

22 See e.g. af Klintberg 2001, 8–9; Tangherlini 1990, 375–376; Brunvand 2003, 3.

6.2

23 Here we make no distinction between the ape and the monkey, as the ancient texts are seldom particular on the exact species mentioned. See McDermott 1938, 88; Kitchell 2014, 5 & 118–122.

24 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 8.80.215.

25 Archilochus *frag.* 89 Bergk, vol. 2, p. 708.

26 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 8.80.215.

27 Lucian *Piscator*, 36; cf. Lucian *Apologia*, 5 for a similar story about Cleopatra's ape. For other dancing apes, see Aelian *De natura animalium*, 5.26; 6.10; 17.25; Porphyry *De abstinentia*, 3.15. Play instruments: Aelian *De natura animalium*, 5.26; 6.10; 17.25; Porphyry *De abstinentia*, 3.15.

28 Juvenal *Saturae*, 5.153–155.

29 Martial *Epigrammata*, 14.202; Porphyry *De abstinentia*, 3.15.

30 Aristophanes *Ranae*, 709; Aristophanes *Aves*, 441; Eubulus *Charites*, frag. 115 Kock; Afranius *Temerarius*, 330 Ribbeck; Cicero *Epistulae ad familiares*, 5.10.1; 7.2.3; 7.12.2; Aristophanes *Ranae*, 1085 (*dêmopithêcôn*); Aristophanes *Vespae*, 1290f. (*pithêkizein*); Aristophanes *Equites*, 887 (*pithêkismos*); see Lilja 1980, 31–33.

31 Phrynicus *Monotropos*, frag. 20 Kock.

32 *OCD*, s.v. "Sycophants".

33 Aristophanes *Acharnenses*, 907.

34 Archilochus, frag. 89 Bergk, vol. 2, p. 708; *Aesopica*, 81; McDermott 1938, 110.

35 Semonides fragment 7, ll. 71–82 Bergk, vol. 2, p. 450–451 = Stobaeus *Florilegium*, 4.22.193; Lloyd-Jones 1975, 22–25.

36 Plutarch *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*, 23 [= *Moralia,* 64e–65a].

37 Menander *Plokion*, frag. 402 Kock, l. 8; cf. Lucillius *Anthologia Palatina*, 11.196; Palladas *Anthologia Palatina*, 11.353; Rufinus *Anthologia Palatina*, 5.76.

38 Plautus *Miles Gloriosus*, 989.

39 McDermott 1938, 148.

40 Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.34.76; 2.32.69.

41 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 50.8.1; Zonaras *Epitome*, 10.28.524a.

42 Both battles ended in defeat; Sparta finally lost its former primacy on the battle field, Mark Antony lost much of his supporters and committed suicide a year later.

43 Plautus *Mercator*, 229–251, 269f, 274–276. For a fascinating analysis of Plautus' use of monkey imagery as a metapoetic figure for his own adaptation of Greek plots to the Roman stage, see Connors 2004.

44 Plautus *Rudens*, 598–610. See also McDermott 1938, 150; Lilja 1980, 35.

45 Suetonius *Nero*, 46.1.

46 Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 2.12; 4.56.

47 Connors 2004, 181; McDermott 1938, 109–110, 115.

48 *Aesopica*, 203.

49 *Aesopica*, 464.

50 Babrius *Fabulae*, 35. The Greek word *athlíês* can either mean "wretchedly" or "related to an athletic contest (most probably wrestling)". Both meanings would be appropriate here.

51 Oppian *Cynegetica*, 2.605–611; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 8.80.216.

6.3

52 Plutarch *Cato Maior*, 20.3–4 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 348].

53 Tacitus *Dialogus de oratoribus*, 28.4, *ibid*, 29.1. See also Tacitus *Germania* 20, in which Germanic women are praised for breastfeeding their own children.

54 Favorinus apud Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 12.1.4–5.

55 Reasons for avoiding maternal nursing: Favorinus apud Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 12.1.7; Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.7.95–103. Maternal breastfeeding vs. wet-nurses: Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.7.84–91. Bond of mind and love: Favorinus apud Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 12.1.21–23.

56 Plutarch *De liberis educandis*, 5 [= *Moralia*, 3c].

57 Joshel 1986, 6–11. Joshel emphasises that the images of the "good nurse" and the "bad nurse" of course derive from the male elite, and say very little about the experiences and perspectives of the nurse. Nurslings of all classes: handing over slave children to nurses seems to have been quite common, not only because the mother may have died in childbirth, but also perhaps to limit the number of women occupied with childcare, freeing some mothers to do their normal work and to produce new children (see Bradley 1992, 203–213).

58 Joshel 1986, 5–6, 8–11.

59 Juvenal *Saturae*, 6.9.

60 Tacitus *Dialogus de oratoribus*, 29.

61 Bradley 1992, 221.

62 Fronto *Epistulae*, 2. p. 124 (Loeb) (= *Ad Antoninum Imperator*, 1.5).

63 Suetonius *Nero*, 50; Suetonius *Domitianus*, 17.3.

64 Dasen 2011, 309; Joshel 1986, 5.

65 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 6.3.

66 Joshel 1986, 11.

67 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.8–2.10; Dasen 2011, 308.

68 Favorinus apud Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 12.11.17.

69 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.8.65–79.

70 Juvenal *Saturae*, 6.114–132; Joshel 1986, 10.

71 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.8.80–82 & 2.8.87–96.

72 Bradley 1992, 215; Bradley 1980.

73 On wet-nurses in pre-industrial Britain: see Fildes 1986, 200–201.

74 Dasen 2011, 307.

75 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 2.8.111–117.

76 The future emperor Augustus disappeared from his cradle and was found only the next morning (Suetonius *Augustus*, 2.94.6). Nero was purportedly subjected to an assassination attempt, allegedly being saved only by a serpent reaching forth from underneath his pillow (Suetonius *Nero*, 6.4). Apparently no one was watching them (see Dixon 1988, 7).

6.4

77 Ovid *Fasti*, 6.147, 6.151–153.

78 Richlin 2014, 271.

79 Seneca the Younger *Consolatio ad Helviam*, 3.2; see also Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.26.62.

80 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.39.93.

81 Parkin 1992, 95.

82 Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum*, 12.13; 12.15; 12.21; 12.18; 12.23; 12.37a;12.38a; 12.41; 12.43; Cicero *Epistulae ad Brutum*, 1.9.1; Graver 2002, xii–xv; Richlin 2014, 272. However, William Altman (2009) has recently argued that this interpretation of Cicero's motivations rests on an overly simplified understanding of the work, and suggests that the Stoic speaker M. should not be taken as identical to Cicero himself. Rather than advocating Stoic repression of unmanly grief, Cicero would, on this view, be celebrating altruism, a virtue most fully embodied in women's giving up their lives for another, a fate suffered by Tullia.

83 Seneca the Elder *Controversiae*, 4. praefatio 4–6. The *controversia* itself is in *Controversiae* 4.1.

84 Richlin 2014, 272, 274.

85 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.26.62.

86 Misfortune to be greatly feared: Cicero states this explicitly, see *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.24.58. Proca is listed as one of the late kings of Alba Longa in Livy *Ab urbe condita*, 1.3.10; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Antiquitates Romanae*, 1.71.4.

87 Statius *Thebais*, 6.161–167.

88 Hanson 1999, 37; Dixon 1988, 110–111.

89 Statius *Thebais*, 6.149–153. On the figure of *nefas*, see Ganiban 2007, 71. Ganiban (2007, 77–78) argues that Statius' Hypsipyle is modelled on Virgil's Aeneas: they share the trait of *pietas*, but Hypsipyle differs from Aeneas in the futility and ultimate defeat of her *pietas* in the dark world of the *Thebaid*. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is depicted as leaving a burning Troy, carrying his aged father on his back while holding his little son Iulus (Ascanius) in his hand. He also asked his father to hold the household gods in his hand. This extraordinary sense of duty earned him the epithet *pius Aeneas* (see Virgil *Aeneis*, 2.707–729; Grubbs 2007, 313).

90 Statius *Thebais*, 6.147.

91 Kaster 2005, 68.

92 Kaster 2005, 72–76.

93 Statius *Thebais*, 5.615–617; Markus 2004, 110.

94 The Latin word *paenitentia* would still cover both emotions in the ancient Roman context, though remorse tended to blend into shame (*pudor*) (Kaster 2005, 80–82).

95 *CIL* 6.19747.

96 Plato *Timaeus*, 69c–71d.

97 Graf 2014, 394, 406. For a discussion of the meanings of the word *saga* in Roman sources, see Paule 2014, 747–751.

98 By analogy with other accusations of witchcraft against anonymous culprits and curses inscribed on tombstones, which were "publicised" in the same manner (see Graf 2014, 395, 400).

6.5

99 Ahmed 2004, 11–13, 67, 74.

100 Ortner 1973.

101 Ortner 1973, 1339–1341.

102 Ortner 1973, 1339, 1342.

103 Hochschild 1979, 561.

104 Probably not any less than they were of the corresponding tension between total dominance over slaves and the fear of their turning against their masters, expressed in the quintessentially Roman jokes on the torture and crucifixion of slaves (see Parker 1989 and Chapter 9 in this book).

105 Hochschild 1979, 561, esp. n. 8; Hochschild 2012, 7. In her later work, Hochschild differentiates between emotion work and emotional labour; the latter is "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value", see Hochschild 2012, 7.

106 Hochschild 1979, 567; Statius *Thebais*, 6.170–171.

107 Ortner 1973, 1343. For the emotional work of women in the Roman family, see Richlin 2014, 270. Richlin combines Hochschild's notion of *emotional labor* with feminist theory on *emotion(al) work*, producing the hybrid concept *emotional work*.

108 Dixon 1988, 105, 111, 115.

109 Langer 1952; Campion-Vincent & Renard 1992, 67–69.

110 Dyregrov 2011, 33.

111 López-Ibor 2005, 7–8; Saari 2005, 44–45.

112 Boss 2006, xvii. A typical example of ambiguous loss is when the dead body of a missing person is never found; in such a case, relatives cannot be completely sure whether the person is really dead or alive, which makes coping more difficult.

113 Frankl 1984 [1959], 121, 125.

114 Boss 2006, 74.

115 Madigan 2011, 81–86; White 2007, 34–37 warns against totalizing the problem.

Notes to Chapter 7

1 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.1; Scobie 1983, 37.

2 Literary texts normally read aloud: Josef Balogh has been one of the foremost advocates for literature being read aloud in antiquity (Balogh 1927, 86–87), and although a number of later scholars have emphasised that silent reading was by no means uncommon, they too point to the fact that literature was frequently read aloud (Knox 1968, 435; Starr 1991, 337–338, not least in the case of novels (Hägg 1983, 93). For an overview of the debate, see Johnson 2000, 593–600 with references. The importance of oral elements in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* has been discussed by a number of scholars, among which we find two experts on ancient folklore, Alex Scobie and Graham Anderson (Scobie 1983; Anderson 2006).

3 Macrobius *Commentarius ex Cicerone in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.2.8.

4 Lawson 1964 [1910], 182.

5 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.2–3, 1.8 & 1.17.

6 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

7 E.g., the existence of Damis' memoirs are considered doubtful in Bowie 1978, 1653, 1663; defended in Anderson 1986, 155–173.

8 Anderson 2006, 75.

9 Following a claim by the Byzantine author Photios (b. *c.* AD 810–d. after 893) that the original – "source and root" – of Lucian's *A True Story* was a work by Antonius Diogenes (Photios *Bibliotheke*, 111b32– 112a4; see the discussion in Morgan 1985), focus in research has been on the different literary works he parodies (Georgiadou & Larmour 1988, 22–44). William Hansen and Graham Anderson in turn point to the oral origin of many of these stories (Hansen 2002, 177, 262, 383; Anderson 2007, 212–217).

10 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.5.

11 Horace *Satirae*, 2.6.77; see also Plautus *Stichus*, 535.

7.1

12 Augustine *De civitate Dei*, 18.18.2. For a discussion of how this work was interpreted in antiquity, see Winkler 1985, 1–2.

13 Donald Lateiner has put forward arguments running counter to ours, that Apuleius had lost all faith in marriage as an institution, and regarded fidelity within marriage as doomed to fail (Lateiner 2000, 316).

14 See, for instance, Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 30.6; Lucan *De bello civili*, 6.451–454; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 5.22.

15 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.5.

16 Pelzer Wagener 1912; Pelzer Wagener 1935.

17 Seneca *De beneficiis*, 2.12.2; Scobie 1975, 91; Keulen 2007, 156.

18 In fact, he is far from being a king, he is a humble salesman, most probably a freedman (Keulen 2000, 315).

19 Keulen 2000, 312–313; Keulen 2007, 152.

20 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.5–1.6.

21 See Aristophanes *Nubes*, 103. This is convincingly argued by Keulen (Keulen 2003, 111–112). In a later work, a commentary on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* book 1, Keulen pointed to the resemblance between Socrates and Cynic beggar-philosophers (Keulen 2007, 160, 162).

22 Zanker 1995, 32–33.

23 Apuleius *Apologia*, 4.23–25.

24 Following Keulen (2007, 189). Buffoons and intellectuals were often likened to each other (Barton 1993, 141), and there was a wide range of jokes on the foolishness of learned men (Bremmer 1997, 17. See, for instance *Philogelos*, 16, 45, 56, 85).

25 See, for instance, Plato *Gorgias*, 527a; Plato *Theaetetus*, 176b.

26 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.6.

27 The fact that they were given guardians demonstrates that they were still underage (see Dixon 1992, 43; Bradley 2000, 187).

28 Saller 1991b, 38, 42.

29 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.26.62.

30 Originally the period of mourning was ten months (Plutarch *Numa*, 12 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 67]; Ovid *Fasti*, 1.25–37, and in the late Roman period it was twelve months (*Codex Iustinianus*, 5.9.2), i.e., in both cases one calendar year. The stipulated period of time was to prevent any doubts about a child's parenthood (*Digesta*, 3.2.11.2; see the discussion in Rawson 1986, 31). If a widow remarried before the stipulated period of mourning, she would suffer *infamia* (*Digesta*, 3.2.11); she could, however, be betrothed during this period (*Digesta*, 3.2.10). See also the discussion on *The Widow of Ephesus* in Chapter 2.2.

31 Rawson 1986, 32; Dixon 1988, 22; Dixon 1992, 89.

32 Suetonius *Divus Augustus*, 34.

33 Rawson 1986, 32.

34 Treggiari 1991b, 498.

35 In Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.6 it is a *pallium*, a garment – a kind of cloak – Romans associated with Greek philosophers, but perhaps this is a reference to the world of the theatre and in particular the type of Roman Comedy known as *Fabula Palliata* (See the discussion in Keulen 2007, 162).

36 Numerous ancient authors mention bathing as a daily practice, see for example: Martial *Epigrammata*, 5.20; Seneca the Younger *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, 68. Bathing was not merely about cleanliness; equally important, it was a social event, for the bath was a place where you met friends and relatives (Fagan 1999, 1).

37 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.5. The Evening-star – Vesperus, that is the Greek Hesperos, our Venus – appears in the West after sunset. Vitruvius states that the time for baths was between midday (i.e., the sixth hour) and Vesper (Vitruvius *De architectura*, 5.10.1).

38 The baths were open from the sixth hour (Juvenal *Saturae*, 11.204–206), but usually visited in the eight hour, i.e., in the afternoon (Martial *Epigrammata*, 4.8; *ibid* 11.51; *SHA Hadrianus*, 22). To bathe at the tenth hour was regarded as late (Martial *Epigrammata*, 3.36). *Bustuaria* – prostitutes living and plying their trade among the tombs outside of the cities

– were not permitted into the baths during daytime (Martial *Epigrammata*, 3.93.15). An inscription from Puteoli mentions another marginalised group in society which could not bathe until late: undertakers, a workforce also responsible for executions (*AE* 1971, no. 88).

39 Robbers play an important role in the ancient novels (Scobie 1975, 95; Shaw 1984, 44; Hopwood 1998; Grünewald 2004, 7; Keulen 2007, 190), and it appears that the risk of being robbed on the highways was a problem emperors had to deal with (Suetonius *Divus Augustus*, 32; Suetonius *Tiberius*, 37; Shaw 1984, 24; van Hooff 1988; Nippel 1995, 101).

40 Keulen 2007, 192; see also Scobie 1975, 95.

41 She is depicted as a heavy drinker in the text (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9). In Latin literature, we find a number of witches carrying names of this sort. In Petronius' novel there is a Priapus-priestess and practitioner of love-magic by the name of *Oenothea*, Greek for "wine-goddess" (*Satyrica*, 134). In one of Ovid's poems a certain *Dipsas*, Greek for "thirst", – an old witch, procuress and possibly former prostitute – is the object of the author's wrath (Ovid *Amores*, 1.8). Courtesans and procuress's names in the works of poets such as Horace and Propertius similarly carried associations to thirst and drinking (see: Myers 1996, 7–8; Cokayne 2003, 145 n. 69). See further *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "merobibus", *merobiba* being the feminine form; see also Plautus *Curculio*, 76–77.

42 Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 122.6; Petronius *Satyricon*, 41; Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 7.152.

43 Plautus *Curculio*, 77; Ausonius *Epigrammata*, 19.41.9–12.

44 Horace *Carmina*, 3.19. 13–18; Philodemus *De morte*, 32.31.

45 Meroë was an Ethiopian city of great significance, situated on an island in the Nile carrying the same name (Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*, 1.33.1–2; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 6.35.179–186). The mention of men from all over the world – including Ethiopia – falling in love with the witch Meroe (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8) may well be a reference to this. However, in a literary work of later date (fourth century AD), Ausonius' *Epigrams*, we find a poem to the drunken hag Meroe: *Meroen anum ebriosam* (Ausonius *Epigrammata*, 41). It is written that her name does not, in this case, refer to her dark skin which is like those born in the Ethiopian Meroë, but instead to the fact that she drinks undiluted wine.

46 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7.

47 It is from a moral, and not legal, perspective that Socrates' extramarital sexual relationship with Meroe is regarded as erroneous and the ultimate cause for things going horribly wrong. For a married woman, a sexual relationship with anyone other than her own husband was strictly prohibited by law and severely punished (*Digesta*, 50.16.101; Cohen 1991, 113–115). In contrast, married men could have sexual relationships with slaves, prostitutes, barmaids, actresses and other women of low social status, women who by law could not commit adultery (Cohen 1991, 109–111, see also Flemming 1999, 54). From a legal perspective, a promiscuous woman, like the innkeeper Meroe, was regarded as a prostitute regardless of whether she was paid for sex or not (*Digesta*, 23.2.43.3).

48 Gaius *Institutiones*, 1.63; see the discussion in Gardner 1986, 91–93.

49 *Digesta*, 50.17.30; Noy 1990, 395; Treggiari 1991b, 54–55.

50 If there was a mutual agreement and there were no other legal obstacles, however, neither documents nor dowry, not even a ceremony, were necessary prerequisites for entering marriage (Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria*, 5.11.32; Treggiari 1991b, 54; Dixon 1992, 64).

51 Susan Treggiari has described *concordia* as: "… the result of a balance of forces, … and emphasises that: it took two to produce it" (Treggiari 1991b, 251; see also Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.27; Bradley 2000, 286–287).

52 The ideal marriage was characterised by love (Plutarch *Coniugalia praecepta*, 32 [= *Moralia*, 143a]; Wohl 1997, 170), but the love within marriage should ideally be of a quiet, rather than passionate, kind; a kind of love that slowly grew

between the spouses: mutual affection (Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1283–87; Brown 1987, 90; see also Musonius Rufus frag. 13a; Ovid *Epistulae ex Ponto*, 3.1.73; Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 6.4.3–4; Dixon 1991, 107).

53 Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 2.1.6–7; see the discussion in Kaster 2005, 25.

54 Kaster 2005, 25–26.

55 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7. This was an unskilled, hence a menial, type of work (Temin 2014, 109).

56 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7.

57 Saller 1991b, 36. It is worth noting that Apuleius himself, in marrying the widow Pudentilla, was the younger part in that marriage. This fact was regarded with utmost suspicion by her relatives, who accused Apuleius of having used love-magic to lure her into marriage (Apuleius *Apologia*, 89–90).

58 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8.

59 Aristomenes calls Meroe a *scortum*, a derogatory term used for prostitutes, specifying that she is old and worn out (Varro *De lingua Latina*, 7.84; Adams 1983, 321–325, Keulen 2007, 201). Both female innkeepers (*Appendix Virgiliana*, *Copa*, 1–4; Flavius Philostratus *Epistulae*, 60 [23]; *CIL* 4.8442; *CIL* 10018.95) and barmaids (*CIL* 9.2689; *Digesta*, 23.2.43 (*Lex Julia et Papia*); *Codex Iustinianus*, 4.56.3) were often prostituted.

60 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9 & 1.12.

61 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 56.3.3–4; Dixon 1992, 69.

62 Moderation in wine-drinking was an important part of proper behaviour and morals in Roman society (d'Arms 1995, 304–305). Alcoholics were consequently regarded with utter contempt in Roman society, in particular women, as excessive drinking was thought to lead to their falling into dishonour (McKinley 1945, 14; Purcell 1994, 194–196). See Anise Strong's illuminating discussion of prostitutes in the Roman world (Strong 2016, 1–10).

63 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8. This comment is, of course, meant to be ironic (Keulen 2007, 204); a "royal" innkeeper being a contradiction in terms, for innkeepers were in many cases either freedwomen or slaves and regarded as low-class in Roman society (*Codex Iustinianus*, 5.27.1; Kleberg 1942, 27–28).

64 In Latin literature, the witches are described as splendidly fearsome creatures with supernatural powers, able to halt the sun and pull down the moon and stars from the sky, a theme also found in Apuleius (*Metamorphoses*, 1.3). The Latin poets Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, Propertius and Lucan all portray witches in similar terms: Horace *Epodi*, 5.45–46; *ibid*, 17.1–5; Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.42–66; Ovid *Heroides*, 6.85–90; Propertius *Elegiae*, 4.5.1; Lucan *De bello civile*, 6.413–6.587; Ogden 2002, 124–125. This idea stretches further back in time, for Pliny the Elder mentions that the Greek comic playwright Menander (342/341–292/291 BC) wrote on witches calling down the moon from the sky (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 30.2.7). And, in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* (3rd century BC) the witch Medea also possesses powers of this kind (*Argonautica*, 3.533). While the description of Meroe in many respects resembled how other witches were represented in Roman literature, it differs in one significant respect. Meroe is described as old, yet handsome and sexually attractive (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7; Felton 2016, 189–190), whereas most other Roman witches were portrayed as hideous old hags evoking emotions such disgust and fear (Felton 2016, 191–193; see also Pollard 2008; Spaeth 2014).

65 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8.

66 Witches were often associated with different forms of love-magic; see for example: Ovid *Heroides*, 6.85–90; Horace *Satirae*, 1.7; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 5.26; see also Dickie 2001, 135. In literature, it was women, i.e. witches, who were associated with love-magic. Other categories of evidence suggest that in real life this type of magic was far from an exclusively female preserve, but was equally performed by men, see: Dickie 2000; Winkler 1991, 227–228.

67 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9. The belief that beavers bit off their genitals to escape capture was widespread in antiquity (see Phaedrus *Fabulae* (*Appendix Perottina*, 30); Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*,

9.47.109; Aelian *Historia animalium*, 6.34; Juvenal *Saturae*, 12.34–35; Scobie 1975, 99; see also Kitchell 2014, 14–15 with references).

68 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9. The transformation of men into frogs as a punishment is also found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Latona – that is Leto – is refused a drink from a pond by Lycian peasants, and as a punishment they are transformed into frogs for times eternal (Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 6.369. See the discussion in Keulen 2007, 215–217).

69 See the discussion in Keulen 2007, 217–218. This is a typical feature of the practitioner of magic – the *magus*, or in this case witch – who is above both morality and the law (Luck 1985, 5).

70 Soranus *Gynaeceia*, 1.55–56; see also Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 3.10.7–9.

71 It was commonly thought that the elephant was pregnant for no less than ten years (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 8.10.28), although Aristotle argued that it was a period of two years (Aristotle *Historia Animalium*, 546b). Perhaps it is no coincidence that the betrayed wife comes to resemble an elephant, for Pliny the Elder describes elephants as having a highly developed sense of shame, emphasising that adulterous intercourse is unknown to these modest animals (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 8.5.12–13). Thus, Meroe is not merely the antithesis of a *matrona*, i.e., a decent, married woman; as pointed out by Debbie Felton, witches also constituted the antithesis of midwives. Witches could provide abortificants preventing birth, rather than helping children to be born, or, as in this case, cast a spell on an antagonist thereby perpetually postponing birth (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9; Felton 2016, 189 & 197–198). Being well beyond the childbearing age, witches were full of resentment towards younger, fertile women, and the driving force behind these evil deeds was envy (Felton 2016, 195). In this respect, they had a lot in common with child-killing demons such as Lamia, Empousa and Gellô (see Chapters 5.2 & 5.3).

72 Stoning had no place in the Roman legal system (Scobie 1975, 101), although it appears to have happened a few times in Roman history as a result of outbursts of popular anger (Keulen 2007, 223; Harries 2007, 131; see also Ovid *Nux*, 3–4; Chariton *De Chaerea et Callirhoe*, 1.5.5). Sarah Iles Johnston has argued that in ancient Greece stoning was a method of executing and expelling polluted individuals (Johnston 1991, 222), a tradition that may have continued into Roman times. An example of this is found in Flavius Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*. When Ephesus suffered from a plague, the townspeople sent for Apollonius' help. In this story, he tells the townspeople of Ephesus to stone an old beggar to death; at first, they hesitate, but urged on they finally do it. Then it turns out that the "beggar" was actually a plague-*daimon* in the form of a colossal Molossian dog (Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.10). Hence it is quite possible it was not merely the anger and resentment of the townspeople that led them to condemn Meroe to stoning. Equally there was the need to purify the town from the pollution caused by a supernatural creature, someone who had performed illegal magic, committed crimes of a repugnant kind, and whose debauched deeds were countless.

73 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.10.

74 In his work *Description of Greece*, the Graeco-Roman author Pausanias (fl. *c.* AD 150) writes about a small town in Roman Greece – Panopaeus in Phocis – whose claims to constitute a city (*polis*) are dismissed by him: "if you can give the name city to those who have no town hall, no gymnasium, no theatre, no place of Assembly, no water from a fountain, but live there in hollowed-out houses like mountains huts, situated near a ravine …" (Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 10.4.1).

75 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.11.

76 Meroe is likened to the witch Medea, and in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* we in fact find a similar scene: "… the bolts of the doors yielded to her spontaneously, springing backwards at her swift magic song" (Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica*, 4.40).

77 According to the *Law of the Twelve Tables* (dating to 451/450 BC), the perpetrator can be punished with death (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 2.4; *Digesta*, 9.2.4.1).

78 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.12.

79 This is a metamorphosis of a distinctly different sort, only indirectly caused by magic.

80 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.12.

81 Theocritus *Idyllia*, 3.50; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica*, 4.54–59; Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 5.1.3–9.

82 Meroe clearly regarded herself as a goddess, as she compared herself with the goddess Calypso (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.12). Similarly, others came to regard her in a similar manner, Aristomenes calls Meroe *a god-like woman*: *feminam divinam* (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8). Appropriately, her sister carries the name *Panthia* "all-divine".

83 Apollodorus *Bibliotheca*, 3.12.2.

84 Boswell 1981, 79; see also Adams 1982, 228 n. 1.

85 Parker 1997, 47–50; see also Skinner 1982, 198–199.

86 See note 47 above.

87 See note 59 above.

88 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.12.

89 Homer *Odyssea*, 5.203–213 & 7.255–256; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7.

90 Homer *Odyssea*, 5.308–312.

91 For an in-depth discussion, see Chapter 9.1.

92 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.12. Here Meroe takes on a male stance, acting much like a Roman orator, making a gesture to accompany her aggressive "speech" about "that good counsellor Aristomenes". Gestures were a fundamental part of Roman oratorical art, and gestures were mainly done with the right hand (Graf 1992, 46; Aldrete 1999, 11). These gestures were specifically aimed at the emotions of the audience, amplifying and underlining what was said (Graf 1992, 40–41; Aldrete 1999, 6–7). In this case, Meroe is fervent to emphasise Aristomenes' total defencelessness when she delivers a death-threat. In another and less intimidating context, however, such as a speech, pointing with the right hand to indicate someone was a perfectly acceptable part of oratory (Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 11.3.89; Aldrete 1999, 17).

93 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13.

94 Euripides *Bacchae*, 1043–1152. Referring to the god Bacchus – the god of winemaking and wine – underlines that Panthia, much like her sister Meroe, is an alcoholic.

95 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9; Keulen 2007, 267.

96 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13.

97 See the discussion in McCreight 1993.

98 Human sacrifice – either about to be undertaken, or in actual fact performed – appears to be a recurrent theme in the ancient novels, for we find this in a number of the Greek novels. In Achilles Tatius' (second century AD) *Leucippe and Clitophon* there is a scene where Leucippe is sacrificed by a band of robbers, her entrails cooked and eaten (Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 3.15), but this sacrifice is staged by two friends of Clitophon with the help of the entrails of an animal and theatrical props, and therefore Leucippe remains alive and well (*ibid*, 3.17–21). There is also mentioned a group of bandits in the novelist Xenophon's (probably second century AD) *An Ephesian tale* who used to sacrifice either animals or humans (Xenophon *Ephesiaca*, 2.13), and in Lollianus' fragmentary work *Phoenician tales* (preserved in a papyrus manuscript of second century AD date) we find a story which at least partially resembles the sacrifice of Socrates in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (1.13). A boy – or possibly a slave – is sacrificed and has his heart removed, which is subsequently cooked on the fire (Lollianus *Phoinikika*, B1 *recto*). The victim's blood is poured into a large wine cup and drunken (Lollianus *Phoinikika*, B1 *verso*). See Jack Winkler's interesting discussion on human sacrifices in the ancient novels (Winkler 1980, 166–168, 170–171). See also Hopwood 1998, 199–200.

99 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 30.1.3; Rives 1995, 67. Pliny the Elder writes that it was a moral obligation for the Roman people to put an end to monstrous rites of this kind (*Naturalis historia*, 30.3.12–30.4.13). See also Tacitus *Annales*, 14.30.

100 On this rite resembling magical rites, see McCreight 1993, 39; see also Scheid 2003, 80. In Roman literature we find descriptions of witches' dreadful magic, magic not only involving blood, but

also other parts of the human body, in particular the heart. For instance, a scene in Petronius' *Satyrica* (63) describes how witches stole the intestines and heart of a dead boy.

101 Rejuvenating ritual: Leinweber 1994, 79. Blood in rejuvenating magic: In a scene in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Medea rejuvenates Aeson – a rite involving sacrificing a black sheep – and its blood (Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.234–293). Meroe is, despite her advanced age, still attractive, and one might suspect that magic was involved. To perform necromancy: this argument is strengthened by the fact that Socrates has told Aristomenes that Meroe performed necromantic rites (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.10). Necromantic rites, that is evocating ghosts from the realm of the dead to use them for different purposes, also involved blood. The blood was given to the ghosts to drink, provisionally allowing them a component of corporeality (Ogden 2002, 179; see also Ogden 2001).

102 Henrich 2000, 174.

103 Euripides *Iphigenia Aulidensis*, 873–1612.

104 In Greek tragedy, scenes like this – using sacrifice as a metaphor – signal utter helplessness (Henrich 2000, 177–182).

105 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.8. Hansen 2002, 13; Anderson 2006, 57; Gorman 2008, 71. Apuleius' text has, as we have made a case of earlier, both oral and literary traits, and as Susan Gorman has put it: "… maintains a tension between orality and literacy" (Gorman 2008, 76). The Messenian story tells of how two witches enter a room at midnight, and: "… they ripped open the poor man's breast, pulled out his liver and other parts, …" (Lawson 1964 [1910], 182).

106 See Apuleius *Apologia*.

107 Exile or death depending on your status in society (*Digesta,* 48.8.16). Committing such a severe crime against a man with dependants – wife and children – was regarded as particularly ruthless (Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 6.1.18).

108 The best evidence for this is in the *Sententiae Pauli* (*The Opinions of Paulus*) legal texts written by the Roman jurist Julius Paulus (fl. *c.* AD 160–230). Two passages commenting on the Republican Roman Law *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis* written by the latter, makes this clear: "Those who perform, or arrange for the performance of, impious or nocturnal rites, to enchant, curse or bind someone, are either crucified or thrown to the beasts" (5.23.15). And: "Those who sacrifice a man or obtain omens from his blood, … are thrown to the beasts, or, if they are *honestiores* [belong to the upper classes], receive capital punishment" (5.23.16). Apuleius returns to the topic of being thrown to the beasts as punishment in *Metamorphoses*, 10.24ff.

109 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13. It is to return to its place of birth, and sponges came from the sea (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.69.148–150). Sponges were used in medicine to clean and still wounds, and also had a wide variety of other medical uses (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 31.47.123–131). The use of a sponge may also have carried a symbolic meaning, however, as an act of contempt by Meroe and Panthia. For sponges were not merely used in medical contexts, as pointed out by Keulen, the Latin noun *spongia* was regarded as sordid, not to be used in official speeches (Seneca the Elder *Controversiae*, 7 praef. 3; Keulen 2007, 275). This is linked to the fact that sponges had other uses, most importantly the sanitary uses in latrines (Taylor 2005, 60; Petznek *et al*. 2011, 101–104; Koloski-Ostrow 2015, 86–88). Sponges were placed on a stick and soaked with water – or in some cases vinegar – as an ancient equivalent to our toilet paper (Martial *Epigrammata*, 12.48; Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 70.20; *AE* 1941, 0005b; see also Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 23.27.55 on medical uses for problems with the anus). Sponges were also used for cleaning tables (Martial *Epigrammata*, 14.144; see also Symphosius *Aenigmata*, 63).

110 Keulen 2007, 269. The term "zombie" derives from the West Indies (most importantly Haiti) and ultimately from West Africa, and originally it was linked to voudou religion (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Zombie"). "Zombie" is now used more widely to denote a dead person being brought back to "life"

by magic (*New Oxford Thesaurus of English*, s.v. "Zombie").

111 Scobie 1975, 109; Watson 2004, 653; Keulen 2007, 276; cf. Petronius *Satyrica*, 61.

112 Horace *Satirae*, 1.2.41–46.

113 On punishments for having committed adultery, see Catullus *Carmina*, 15.18; Horace *Satirae*, 1.2.41–46; Juvenal *Saturae*, 10.289–291; Martial *Epigrammata*, 2.47; 2.60; 2.83; 3.85; Chariton *De Chaerea et Callirhoe*, 6.4; *Digesta*, 48.5.25. These punishments can be regarded as a kind of rape (see: Keulen 2006, 50–51).

114 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.14.

115 Keulen 2007, 276.

116 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.14. Crucifixion was not only a dreadful way of dying, slow and painful; it was a public spectacle meant to humiliate and dishonour the criminal. Moreover, if the corpse was left to rot on the cross or was simply dumped (Petronius *Satyrica*, 111; Seneca the Elder *Controversiae*, 8.4.1; Phaedrus *Fabulae* (*Appendix Perottina*, 15); see also Granger Cook 2014, 118), i.e., was denied burial rites and a grave, that would have meant that the soul did not come to rest (Hope 2000, 112, 116). In other words, the punishment carried a clear element of vengeance. Legal texts make it clear that relatives could be allowed to claim the corpse for burial, but permission to do so was not always granted. Furthermore, lest someone did claim the corpse, it would remain unburied (*Digesta*, 48.24.1). Other sources also suggest that executed criminals did not always receive burial. Seneca the Younger argues, however, that the wise man, turning to the emperor Nero: "… will bury even the corpse of a criminal …" (Seneca the Younger *De clementia*, 2.6.2).

117 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.15. On robbers as a theme in the ancient novel, see note 39 above.

118 A number of ancient authors ridicule what they regarded as superstitious fear concerning the Underworld (see, for example, Lucian *De Luctu*, 2–9).

119 For instance, the main character in the *Metamorphoses*, Lucius, is falsely accused of having murdered three robbers. These accusations turn out to be part of a form of prank – or rather a ritual hoax – in the Risus festival, devoted to the god of laughter (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, book 3).

120 Suicide by hanging was deeply despised and regarded as unmanly (van Hooff 1990, 66–67), and perhaps this is to be seen as yet another pun on Aristomenes' name, for he is anything but acting in a manly and heroic manner.

121 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13.

122 In the ancient novels, suicide – aborted suicide attempts, that is – constitute a recurring theme (Scobie 1975, 113; Hägg 1983, 8, 13, 33; see for instance, Chariton *De Chaerea et Callirhoe*, 8.1.4.).

123 Socrates' condescending words concerning innkeepers (*stabularii*) is perhaps a reference to the fact that Meroe is described as an innkeeper (*caupona*). Bars and inns were associated with the lower echelons of society (*Digesta*, 4.8.21.11), by some of the authors even with the dregs of society (Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.158ff; Seneca the Younger *De providentia*, 5.4; Ammianus Marcellinus *Rerum gestarum*, 14.25). As a result, innkeepers, male and female alike, were often regarded with the utmost suspicion by the ancient authors. Accusations varied from cheating to killing clients, even of practicing cannibalism. The latter we find in the medical author Galen (Galen *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis et facultatibus*, 10.2.2; Galen *De alimentorum facultatibus,* 3.1).

124 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.17.

125 See, for instance, Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.38.92; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 2.25.5.

126 Aristomenes smells like a latrine (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.17), that is a sharp and stinking smell (see Columella *De re rustica*, 9.5.1; on the smell of latrines, see also Hobson 2009, 106–107; Jansen 2015, 131).

127 Reference to the witches as *lamiae* is also a possible reference to Aristophanes' description of Lamia as stinking like a seal (Aristophanes *Vespae*, 1032–1035; see also *Suda*, s.v. "Λαμία"). It may also refer to other stories about the mythical monster, that she was once beautiful (Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca historica*,

20.41.3–5; *Suda*, s.v. "Λαμία"). Even before having his throat cut and being emptied of blood, Socrates is described as pallid and lifeless: he is emptied of energy. As pointed out by Leinweber, Meroe clearly displays similarities to the vampiristic *lamiae* (Leinweber 1994, 79).

128 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.18. As pointed out by Keulen (2007, 338), the plane tree is an homage to the philosopher Socrates, and the opening of Plato's *Phaedrus* (228e–230e).

129 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.18.

130 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 4.484–485.

131 Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.570–579.

132 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.19.

133 In some respects, the fate of the historical Socrates resembles that of the fictional Socrates. The former would die when he has emptied the cup with poison; the fictional Socrates would die as soon as he came into contact with water and the sponge would release itself, and he dies drinking out of a quiet stream. In other words, both are supposed to have died while drinking. There are also obvious differences: the death of the historical Socrates appears to have been a relatively slow process which has often been associated with the poisoning effects of hemlock (Plato *Phaedo*, 117e–118a; Bloch 2002), whereas the fictional Socrates' death is sudden (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.19).

134 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.19.

135 Publilius Syrus *Sententiae*, 182. Publilius Syrus lived in the first century BC (fl. 46–29 BC); however, some of the sentences may have been incorporated into this work at a later date (see *OCD*, s.v. "Publilius Syrus"). A similar sentiment is found in Ovid who was forced into exile (*Ibis*, 15–16). Although Aristomenes was far from being part of the elite, it is worthy of note that exile was a capital punishment for this part of society (Crook 1976 [1967], 273). Aristomenes' exile is, however, at least in some sense of the word voluntary: it is an attempt to escape being sentenced to death. There is one significant difference in the exile that Publilius Syrus speaks of and that of Aristomenes, for he says: "… now I live in Aetolia and have contracted a new marriage" (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.19). Like Socrates, Aristomenes is forced to abandon his wife and family. Aristomenes was originally from Aegium in Achaia on the south coast of the Gulf of Corinth; being in exile in Aetolia meant that he had to move to the north coast of the Gulf of Corinth, an area familiar to him from his work as a travelling tradesman.

7.2

136 Ogden 2002, 62.

137 Suburbs were viewed as liminal places, neither being part of the city proper, nor the surrounding countryside. A great deal of supernatural tales of Roman date – as shown by Julia Doroszewska stories about liminal beings such as demons and ghosts – were frequently set in liminal places such as suburbs (Doroszewska 2017, 1). Moreover, it is worthy of note that Menippus met the *empousa* on the road to Cenchreae, one of Corinth's two harbours, in itself a liminal place: set on the boundary between land and sea, between civilisation and nature (for a discussion on the liminal character of harbours, see Chapter 11.3).

138 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25. Debbie Felton has pointed to the resemblance between this story and Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche, in which Psyche's envious sisters describe the husband – whom she has never seen – as a serpent (Felton 2013).

139 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25. The fact that Apollonius of Tyana was a neo-Pythagorean is in this context perhaps not an insignificant feature: after all, he himself rejected marriage (see: Ogden 2002, 61). As argued below, Apollonius' actions are intended to lead Menippus back on the right track. The text as a whole, however, does not reflect neo-Pythagorean views, but rather mirrors the general Roman standpoint with regard to marriage.

140 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25. In "The Spell of Pnouthis", we find instructions on how to acquire a magical assistant, who will take care of all arrangements (see *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 1.107–112; Betz 1986, 6).

141 Street-walkers and other prostitutes often walked or stood along the streets (see, for example Catullus *Carmina*,

58.4; Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1071; Propertius *Elegiae*, 2.23.15; Martial *Epigrammata*, 2.63; *Carmina Priapea*, 19. See also *Anthologia Palatina* [Philodemus], 5.46).

142 Plautus *Curculio*, 33–38.

143 Shaw 1987, 33, 43–44.

144 Treggiari 1991a, 105–107; Osgood 2006, 418–419.

145 *Empodeia* means "impediment" in Greek, and *empousai* were almost always involved in obstructing or hindering something, in this case preventing Menippus from pursuing his philosophical studies (Johnston 1999, 134; Doroszewska 2017, 6). For Menippus is young, still an adept of philosophy, about to be initiated. It is at this point the *empousa* lures him to leave the philosophical world and enter the material one (or rather what appears to be the material world, for it is all an illusion). Apollonius' actions not only save the young man's life, it leads him back to the right path of life, and allows him to be initiated into the philosophical world a wiser man (Anderson 1986, 141–142; Doroszewska 2017, 7).

146 Gold 2006, 167; see also Harlow & Laurence 2002, 79.

147 Cicero's acid description of Clodia resembles that of the *empousa*. She invites strange men to her house, according to Cicero to satisfy their sexual lusts. She attends banquets with men to whom she is not related, and dresses in a manner no modest woman would. In so acting, she has made it obvious to all and sundry what she is: a whore of the worst kind (Cicero *Pro Caelio*, 49).

148 By law, unmarried women were under *patria potestas*, i.e. under the legal and absolute authority of their father, or grandfather, should he still be alive (Gardner 1986, 5–11; Grubbs 2002, 20). Valid marriage required consent of both the bride's and groom's fathers (*Digesta*, 23.2.2 [Paulus]; Noy 1990, 393–394).

149 Treggiari 1991b, 44, 56. Being prohibited from marriage with freeborn men, prostitutes could only form valid marriages with freedmen (Skinner 2005, 206).

150 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

151 Plautus' *Mostellaria*.

152 See Leinweber 1994, 77–78.

153 Lucian *Verae historiae*, 2.46.

154 The "ass-women" also have another parallel in Lucian's work, namely the "vine-women" (*Verae historiae* 1.7–1.9; Georgiadou & Larmour 1988, 68–70; see also note 184 below).

155 Aristophanes *Ranae,* 288–295; see also the discussion in Georgiadou & Larmour 1988, 230–231.

156 In Roman times, parts of the sterile mule (such as urine, ear-wax, part of the hide, testicles) were used in amulets and medicine as a contraceptive: Dioscorides *De materia medica*, 1.109; Soranos *Gynaeceia*, 1.20 [1.64]; *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 36.320–32. She-asses were, in contrast, regarded as particularly fertile (Palladius *Opus agriculturae*, 1.35.16). Neither mules nor donkeys were held in high regard and were often maltreated, see for instance: Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.12–13; Columella *De re rustica*, 7.1.2; Plutarch *De cupiditate divitiarum* 5 [= *Moralia,* 525e]. Plutarch stresses that despite their sterility, mules have genitalia and know how to use them with pleasure (Plutarch *Terrestriane an aquatilia animalia sint callidiora,* 4 [= *Moralia*, 962b]).

157 Alex Scobie argues that creatures like Lamia – or Sirens and Harpies – are to be seen as: "… mythical projections of male anxieties about female sexuality" (Scobie 1983, 23), and he compares these in turn with Lucian's vine-women and ass-women in *A True Story* (Lucian *Verae historiae*, 1.8 & 2.46). Arguing along similar lines as Scobie, Sarah Alison Miller traces the *vagina dentata* "the vagina with teeth" back to another of these monstrous creatures: Scylla. In an example of Classical Greek art discussed by her, Scylla is depicted as half-woman – half-monster: a female creature featuring a beautiful human face and torso, but with a monstrous lower body consisting of two snarling dogs and a sea-serpent tail. The vagina – reasons Miller – is "[an] object of pleasure [that] becomes the agent of violence: the passive pleasuring body becomes an active punishing body" (Miller 2012, 312).

158 Plautus *Menaechmi*, 337–345; *Anthologia Palatina*, 5.44.

159 Plautus *Menaechmi*, 337–345; *Anthologia Palatina*, 12.42; *ibid* 12.167.

160 See also Taylor 1997, 341; Slater 1999.

161 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.5. "Snake-women" are also found in other literary works. In Herodotus (*c.* 484–*c.* 420 BC), we find a story of how the hero Heracles met a creature dwelling in a cave in Scythia – half-woman and half-snake – who made him have intercourse with her (*Historiae*, 4.9).

162 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.12–13.

163 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.15. When approached by a man it was thought not only befitting for a young woman to drop her eyes, but it was also a behaviour regarded as inherently attractive (see Ovid *Amores,* 2.5.43).

164 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.25–27. Some prostitutes wore no under-wear, that is no *strophium*, "breast-band" (see Catullus *Carmina*, 55.11 [in Pompey's Portico]), or were all together nude (Juvenal *Saturae*, 11.151–153 [in a bar]; *Carmina Priapea*, 19 [a streetwalker]).

165 Martial *Epigrammata*, 11.88.

166 Cicero *Pro Caelio*, 20.47–48; see also Horace *Satirae,* 1.2.31; Pseudo-Acro Scholia ad Horatium *Satirae*, 1.2.31.

167 Musonius Rufus, frag. 12 (Lutz); Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 7.133–150.

168 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 7.135.

169 Anderson 2000, 155.

7.3

170 Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 13.558a–e; *ibid* 13.583e; Galen *Adhortatio ad artes addiscendas*, 10.43–52. See also the discussion of courtesans' names in McClure 2003, ch. 2.

171 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.24–27; Heraclitus *De incredibilibus* [Stern], 1, 2, 8, 14; Lucian *Verae historiae*, 2.46; Pseudo-Lucian *Philopatris*, 9.

172 In ancient Rome, prostitutes were often likened with wolves (see for example: Lactantius *Divinae institutiones*, 1.20; Adams 1983, 332–333) and we also find the name *Lupa* (Latin "wolf") (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Antiquitates Romanae*, 1.84.4). A number of names of Greek *hetaira*s – and also in later Roman times – have their root in the Greek word for lion: *Leaena*, *Leontion* or *Laïs* (McClure 2003, 71–72; see *Leaena* in Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 34.19.72; Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 577d; *ibid* 13.593a; Lactantius *Divinae institutiones*, 1.20; see also a prostitute by the name of Leaena who sold sex to women in Lucian *Dialogi Meretricii*, 5). Pausanias writes that the famous Corinthian courtesan Laïs' grave had a statue of a lioness (Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 2.1.4–5). The lion was perceived as an animal in which the masculine dominated (Gleason 1990, 393, 404–405), and perhaps the prostitute's sexuality was seen as almost manly in its nature. Laura McClure instead relates this name to the erotic lioness schema (McClure 2003, 71–72).

173 See Holt N. Parker's (1997) discussion of active–passive in Roman sexuality.

174 See McClure 2003, 5–6, 21, 32, 169.

175 See Davidson 1997, 73; McClure 2003, 108–116; Cohen 2006, 112; Glazebrook 2006, 127.

176 Laïs was a famous and once exceedingly wealthy courtesan living in Corinth in the classical era, at the end of the fifth century BC (Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 1.8; Plutarch *De tuenda sanitate praecepta*, 6 [= *Moralia,* 125b]; Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 2.1.4–5; *Anthologia Palatina*, 6.1, 6.18 & 6.20. See also Davidson 1997, 142).

177 Prostitutes in the Greek world could often be "barbarians" or "non-Greeks", not least from the East (Hamel 2003, 4–5). Prostitutes in the Roman world were many times foreigners, often from the East (Propertius *Saturae*, 2.23.21; *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Copa* 1; Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.60–3.66; Flavius Philostratus *Epistulae*, 47; see also Herter 1960, 71; Adams 1983, 341).

178 Gilhuly 2014; Hamel 2003, 3; McClure 2003, 140–142; McClain & Rauh 2011, 148.

179 Hamel 2003, 3.

180 Cohen 2006, 112.

181 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

182 McClure 2003, 21; see also Davidson 1997, 81.

183 *Der Neue Pauly*, s.v. "Paradoxographoi".

184 Heraclitus *De incredibilibus*, 14 [Stern].

185 Lucian *Verae historiae*, 2.46. The order of the last two clauses has been reversed to yield more idiomatic English.

186 Apuleius speaks of *scorta et pocula* "whores and wine-beakers" (Apuleius *Apologia*, 98) and Livy of *vino et scortis* "wine and whores" (Livy *Ab urbe condita*, 45.2; see also Seneca the Younger *De brevitate vitae*, 16.5 as well as the discussion of Meroe above). In fact, there is also another story in Lucian's *A True Story* based on the associations made between women of lesser repute and wine: that of "vine-women". These creatures, which are half-women and half-vines, used sex to ensnare sailors (Lucian *Verae historiae*, 1.6–1.9; see also Georgiadou & Larmour 1997).

187 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.25.

188 Demosthenes *De Corona*, 18.129–130; Brown 1991, 43. See also Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae*, 1056.

189 Anaxilas, frag. 22 Kock [= Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 13.558a].

190 See McClure 2003, 114.

191 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

192 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.12–13.

193 Galen *Adhortatio ad artes addiscendas*, 10.43–52.

7.4

194 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1058–1120; Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 116.4–5.

195 See Chapter 4 for discussion.

196 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 8.10.

197 Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.8.52; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 10.2; Heliodorus *Aethiopica*, 3.5 & 4.7; Chariton *De Chaerea et Callirhoe*, 4.2. See also Rudd 1981, 144.

198 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

199 Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25.

200 Some arranged marriages resulted in love and harmony, yet others in hatred and conflict (see Noy 1990; Treggiari 1991a; Treggiari 1994; Wohl 1997, 170–171; James 2003, 5).

201 Catullus *Carmina*, 76.20; Ovid *Remedia amoris*, 43–44; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 10.2; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 1.6; Heliodorus *Aethiopica*, 4.7; *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*, 18; see the discussion in Fantham 1972, 88–89 (with references); Skinner 1987; Toohey 1992; Booth 2006 [1997]; Gill 2006b [1997].

202 Caelius Aurelianus *Chronicae Passiones*, 1.176; Biesterfeldt & Gutas 1984 (with references); Toohey 1992.

203 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1069–1083; see also Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 3.395–397; *Anthologia Palatina*, 5.266.

204 Foucault 1984, 305–308.

205 Konstan 1994, 6–9.

206 LiDonnici 1998, 70–76.

207 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1066; Inwood 1997, 62.

208 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 1.28.7.

209 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 2.17.19–22; Dillon 1997, 216–217.

210 Inwood 1997, 62.

211 Ogden 2002, 135.

212 Leinweber 1994, 79.

213 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.285–293.

214 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.297–349.

215 Leinweber 1994, 79; see, however, the discussion in Chapter 7.1 on different uses of blood in magic.

216 Dillon 1997, 217.

217 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.129–130; Inwood 1997, 59, 63.

218 Arius Didymus *Liber de philosophorum sectis*, 5b9 = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.717; Inwood 1997, 63–64.

219 Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.6.27–29.

220 Harris 2001, 264, 268–272, 280.

221 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.2.10.

222 Friedrich 1993, 219.

223 Menander *Samia*, 216–217, 279, 361, 363, 411–412, 415, 419, 563, 620, 703; Galen *De propriorum animi cuiuslibet affectuum dignotione et curatione*, 5.2; cf. Lucian *Abdicatus*, 30 (repeated *orgê* transformed into madness); Horace *Carmina*, 1.16.5–9; Horace *Epistulae*, 1.2.62; Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 1.1.3–4; Harris 2001, 63–64, 304.

224 Harris 2001, 63–65. For passages on love, see above.

225 Homer *Ilias*, 9.239, 9.305, 13.53, 21.542; Simon 1978, 68; Harris 2001, 344.

226 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.4.27–28, 1381a.

227 Plutarch *Coniugalia praecepta*, 14, 16 [= *Moralia,* 140a, 140b].

228 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.2.1379b2–4.

229 Harris 2001, 272.

230 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.16–17.

231 Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 5.16–17.

7.5

232 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1063–1072 & 1160–1169; Nussbaum 1996, 175–176.

233 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1174–1184.

234 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1111 & 4.1185–1189.

235 Nussbaum 1996, 173–174.

236 Housman 1972, 432–435.

237 Brown 1987, 296–297.

238 Nussbaum 1996, 179–181.

239 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.1190–1208, 4.1283–1287; Nussbaum 1996, 182–186. Sorabji (2002 [2000], 275) finds this an overly optimistic reading of Lucretius' argument, and prefers to interpret it as a statement of the rarity of successful love and co-habitation despite these physical imperfections. This reading seems to us overly pessimistic in its turn, as these passages seem to carry no such intrinsic pessimism.

240 Loue 2008, 133.

241 Loue 2008, 134.

242 Ricoeur 1990a [1983], 80–81; Ricoeur 1991, 150; Paul Ricoeur borrowed the term from François Dagognet 1973, who applied it to the visual arts.

243 Ricoeur 1991, 351 uses the term "imaginative variations" with reference to the experience and emplotment of time in narrative; for a similar argument regarding tragedy based on Aristotle's *Poetics*, see Halliwell 1992, 253.

244 Hägg 1983, 166.

245 Aristotle *Poetica*, 4.1448a.16–18.

246 Aristotle *Poetica*, 13.1453a.13–15.

247 Aristotle *Poetica*, 4.1449a.34–35, 12.1452b.9.

248 Aristotle *Poetica*, 6.1449b.27, 13.1453a.5–6.

249 See also Halliwell 2009, 177.

250 Nussbaum 2005 [2001], 240–243. She attributes these more generalised emotions to what she, borrowing from Wayne Booth (1983 [1961]), terms the perspective of the implied author.

251 Nussbaum 2005 [2001], 238, 244.

252 Tangherlini 2013, 52; af Klintberg 1987, 56–57.

253 Tangherlini 2013, 52.

254 Lawson 1964 [1910], 182–183.

255 Belfiore 1992, 260–290, 355–358.

256 Belfiore 1992, 357.

257 See Janko 1987.

258 Janko 1987, 44.

259 Golden 1992a, 379–380.

260 Cooper 1922, 60–98.

261 Lucas 1957, 45.

262 Golden 1992a, 381.

263 Golden 1992a, 385.

264 Richlin 1992.

265 Parker 1989.

266 Garland 2010 [1995], ch. 5.

267 See Richlin 1992, 58–63 for a discussion of this figure, represented by the ithyphallic god Priapus, in Roman sexual humour.

268 Richlin 1992.

269 Richlin 1992, 59.

270 Richlin 1992, 63.

271 See Richlin 1992, 76–77 for discussion; cf. Garland 2010 [1995], 75.

272 For a fuller discussion, see Asplund Ingemark 2013.

273 See e.g.: Cullberg 2011 [2006] (crisis intervention); Pennebaker 1997 (expressive writing).

274 White & Epston 1990 (narrative therapy).

275 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 1.28.31–33; Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 136–139.

276 Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 139–141.

277 Nussbaum 2006b [1993], 144.

Notes to Chapter 8

1 Professor Barbara Rosenwein, personal communication, April 2014.

2 Rosenwein 2003b; Rosenwein 2003c; Gammerl 2012.

8.1

3 Jessica Graybill uses the concept of "emotional ecological topography", a concept which is markedly different from our concept of "emotional topography". In her work, she focuses on how a landscape and its ecology is emotionally perceived by local inhabitants (Graybill 2013).

4 Stattin 1990, 96–97, 155. Stattin's work has in turn been inspired by the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan's work *Landscapes of Fear* (1980).

5 Pain 1997, 234 citing Kinsey 1984 (*non vidi*). See also Koskela 1999, 111–113; Pain 2000, 366.

6 Bondi, Davidson & Smith 2007, 3. See also Anderson & Smith 2001; Davidson & Milligan 2004.

7 Whereas our concept focuses on the relations between places – mostly, but not solely, in the city and its immediate surroundings – the concept of "emotional geography" also includes the location of emotions within the human body (Bondi, Davidson & Smith 2007, 3).

8 See for instance Hanawalt & Kobialka 2000, ix; Cresswell 2004, 11.

9 Lynch 1960, 2.

10 Gammerl 2012, 164–165.

11 Hanawalt & Kobialka 2000, x.

12 Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 27.

13 Lefebvre 2004, 8, 28, 73–83, 90.

14 In the fall of 2003.

15 This problem was less prominent at the time of writing – the fall of 2015 – than some twelve years prior when the authors lived at the Swedish Institute. Nonetheless, as one of the authors' (D.I.) walked through the park with a colleague after dark on a couple of occasions in December of 2015, this created a degree of anxiety and nervousness. Cf. Lefebvre 2004, 90.

16 See Pain 1997, 234 citing Kinsey 1984.

17 Lupton 1999, 126; see also Pain 2000, 366; Body-Gendrot 2001, 916.

18 See, for example Strandberg 2014.

19 Koskela 1999, 114.

20 Pain 1997, 234.

21 Thrift 2004, 57.

22 Following Henri Lefebvre, the latter can be seen as a linear repetition (Lefebvre 2004, 30), for traffic jams occur according to factors such as for instance when people start and end work. Should these factors change in any respect, for instance the time when people usually start work, the constantly re-occurring traffic jams will occur at another time.

23 Body-Gendrot 2001, 915–916. Walklate 2001; Sparkes, Girling & Loader 2001.

24 Tuan 1980, 209.

25 Pain 1997, 234 citing Kinsey 1984.

26 Pain 2001, 902.

27 Gammerl 2012, 164.

28 Gammerl 2012, 164–165.

8.2

29 Tuan 1980, 107.

30 Delumeau 1978, 121–122.

31 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.85–93 & 6.33–41; Seneca the Younger *De constantia sapientis*, 5.2. A child waking up paralysed by fear as a result of a nightmare is, however, to be seen as an example of fear in the night, argues Delumeau (1978, 122).

32 Ker 2004.

33 See for instance Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 1.143–144; Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 10.3.25. Writing at night was connected to the reasonably well-off in the City of Rome who could afford to live in quiet and calm areas; those less well-off had to endure the noise of heavy wagons causing a racket driving through the narrow streets at night (Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.247–253), which was due to laws and regulations concerning transports on wagons introduced at the time of Julius Caesar (45 BC), concerning the City of Rome specifically (*Tabula Heracleensis*, 14; Robinson 1992, 75). For those who lived near the river Tiber, for instance in Transtiberim, a poor neighbourhood, would hear the noise of the bargees and boatswains shouting as

they were trying to get in the barges filled with goods to the quays on the other side of the river (Martial *Epigrammata*, 4.64.21–24). In many parts of Rome – as indeed in other Roman cities – the noisy activity of the millers and bakers working at night also disturb those living in the neighbourhoods (Martial *Epigrammata*, 12.1–17). In most Roman cities, however, night would on the whole have been a time of tranquillity and quiet, with perhaps the occasional bark of a dog (Ovid *Fasti*, 5.429–430).

34 For instance, Juvenal writes of *pericula noctis* "the dangers of the night" (Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.268). These negative sentiments relate to urban locations, to the life in the cities, and not to rural settings. In the countryside, one could take advantage of the cool nights, for instance in harvesting the hay (Virgil *Georgica*, 1.287–290).

35 Cicero *In Verrem*, 2.5.26; Seneca the Younger *De brevitate vitae*, 16.4; Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 122.4–5. For instance, a number of the Roman emperors – the "bad emperors" – were accused of having a habit of drinking, dicing, whoring and picking fights at night (Suetonius *Nero*, 26; Tacitus *Annales*, 13.25; Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 61.8.1; Suetonius *Otho*, 2; *SHA Lucius Verus*, 4; *SHA Commodus Antonius*, 3).

36 Excrement, garbage, and even the bodies of dead animals could be thrown into the streets, completely disregarding the fact that this was strictly prohibited by law (for a discussion of this, see below).

37 See, for instance, Juvenal's description of the crowded streets at Rome (Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.244–248). See also Ray Laurence's in-depth discussion of the activity in a Roman city from a temporal and spatial perspective (Laurence 1994, ch. 8). The focus of Laurence's discussion is almost exclusively on the activities that took place during the day, whereas the night is only touched upon very briefly.

38 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9. The lover being outside his mistress's locked house late at night is a common *topos* in Latin love poetry, see for instance Ovid *Amores*, 1.6.29–34; Propertius *Elegiae*, 1.16.18–26.

39 Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.303–304.

40 Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.158–163. To visit a brothel was considered embarrassing by some (Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 1.78), not least since both brothels and the prostitutes were regarded as impure and filthy, evoking a feeling of disgust (Petronius *Satyrica*, 8; *Carmina Priapea*, 14.10; *Digesta*, 4.8.21.11). Many would therefore visit them disguised with hoods or hats in the cover of darkness, and many brothels were open late (Juvenal *Saturae*, 6.117; Lucian *Dialogi mortuorum*, 10). A number of sources mention stinking and sooty oil lamps in the brothels (Seneca the Elder *Controversiae*, 1.2.21; Juvenal *Saturae*, 6.131; *Carmina Priapea*, 13).

41 Tuan 1980, 107; Stattin 1990, 73.

42 To speak of a police force in the modern sense of the word is not possible in the Roman period (Robinson 1992, 173–180; Nippel 1995, 1–3, 35). The *cohortes urbanae* "urban cohort", established by Augustus – are sometimes termed "the police force of Rome", but this force was not involved in day-to-day law enforcement, rather this remained the responsibility of the citizens themselves (*OCD*, s.v. "Police"; *OCD*, s.v. "*cohortes urbanae*"; Nippel 1995, 35, 113). The function of the *vigiles* – another force in Rome – is that of a fire brigade consisting of watchmen and fire-fighters. The watchmen were on the outlook for fires and patrolled the city at night-time for the outbreak of fires, which constituted a constant danger in the densely populated city (Rainbird 1986, 151; Robinson 1992, 107).

43 Horace *Epistulae*, 1.2.32; Horace *Satirae*, 1.2.41–46; Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.278–301.

44 Propertius *Elegiae*, 2.29a. In his work *On anger*, Seneca the Younger argues that wine increases the body heat, hence that it kindled bad tempers and outright anger and rage (Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.19.5).

45 The wealthy would be accompanied by guards – men carrying torches, even candelabra – whereas those without means had to walk alone (Propertius *Elegiae*, 1.3.10; Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.283–285). Ovid, in contrast, urges his girlfriend to let him in at night, as he wanders alone and unarmed (Ovid *Amores*, 1.6.29–34).

46 Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.25–30; Horace *Satirae*, 1.2.42; Juvenal *Saturae*,

3.302–308; Petronius *Satyrica*, 9. See also Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 3.19.2.

47 Horace *Epistulae*, 1.2.32.

48 Carbonnier 1959, 348; Harries 2007, 43. A thief caught in the act of committing burglary at night could legally be killed (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 2.4; *Digesta*, 9.2.4.1), but not a thief caught stealing during day, i.e., lest he was armed (*Digesta*, 47.2.56.2).

49 It appears that the night was regarded as a lawless time when these laws were written – 451/450 BC – and nocturnal meetings were prohibited in the City of Rome (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 8.26; Kippenberg 1997, 153–154).

50 As pointed out by Donald Lateiner, the link between these emotions is sometimes direct, for filth aroused the instinctive apprehension of harm through pollution, in the form of what we today know to be toxic pathogens and contagious bacteria (Lateiner 2016, 214; see also the discussion in Skotheim 2016, 268–269).

51 *Digesta*, 43.10.1, 3–5.

52 *Digesta*, 9.3.1; *ibid* 9.3.1.2; *ibid*, 44.7.5.5.

53 Scobie 1986, 417; Taylor 2005, 57–58; Hobson 2009, 71; Petznek *et al.* 2011, 96. Lacking latrines, many high-rise houses, for instance in Ostia, had toilets on ground level (Scobie 1986, 414; Robinson 1992, 119; Dodge 2000, 192; Hobson 2009, 71).

54 Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.274–278.

55 Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.270–271. Broken pots had little value and were not normally recycled, although there was some re-use of pottery shards in agricultural contexts (Columella *De re rustica*, 3.15.4).

56 It was prohibited to throw down objects on places where people used to pass or stand, as these might injure or even kill people (*Digesta*, 9.3.1).

57 In Petronius, we find a scene where Giton, Ascyltus and Encolpius walk with bleeding feet through the dark streets of the city (Petronius *Satyrica*, 79).

58 *CIL* 4.7716; *CIL* 4.10619; Persius *Saturae*, 1.110–114.

59 *CIL* 3.1966; Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 2.26.

60 E.g. behind a water distribution tower in Herculaneum (*CIL* 4.10488); to pollute public water sources was prohibited by law (*Digesta*, 47.11.1.1).

61 Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.38–39.

62 Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.38–39; Juvenal *Saturae*, 1.127–131; *ibid*, 6.306–313.

63 *CIL* 4.3413; *CIL* 4.8899.

64 *Foricae*, i.e. public latrines, could often be found near the *forum*, the baths and amphitheatres in Roman cities (Petznek *et al.* 2011, 99; Jansen 2015, 129, 134). We know nothing about their opening hours, but as there is no evidence to suggest that these were open at night, one may assume that they were closed.

65 Columella *De re rustica*, 9.10.2.

66 Horace *Satirae*, 1.6.105; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.20; Casson 1974, 181–182.

67 Horace *Satirae*, 1.6.103–104; Casson 1974, 179–180.

68 Columella *De re rustica*, 1.3. 4; *ibid*, 7.1.3; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.32.

69 Casson 1974, 179.

70 Cato *De agricultura*, 1.3; Varro *De re rustica*, 1.16.6; Columella *De re rustica*, 1.3.3; Virgil *Georgica*, 1.273–275.

71 Strabo *Geographia*, 5.3.8.

72 Virgil *Georgica*, 1.273–275; Columella *De re rustica*, 7.1.1.

73 *Tabula Heracleensis*, 16; Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.57; Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 1.7 ext. 10; Robinson 1992, 73–74; Patterson 2000, 93.

74 Horace *Satirae*, 1.5.

75 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.15.

76 For a discussion on brigands in the novels and in reality respectively, see Hopwood 1998. Banditry had an important role in bringing the story forward in the ancient novels, see Mackey 1963; Winkler 1980; Hopwood 1998; Grünewald 2004; Graverini 2015.

77 In elegiac poetry, lovers going to their mistresses at night risk encountering robbers in the city (see above). Propertius is, in contrast, summoned by his mistress Cynthia to Tibur at midnight, and ventures out of the City itself despite all brigands, thereby demonstrating his bravery and his trust in the fact that no

one will hurt a lover accompanied by Venus herself (Propertius *Elegiae*, 3.16).

78 See Cairns 2010, 70.

79 See for instance *Digesta* 13.6.5.4; *ibid*, 27.1.13.7; *ibid*, 39.6.3; *ibid*, 48.19.11.2; *ibid*, 49.16.14.

80 Shaw 1984, 9.

81 In a Latin schoolbook for pupils practising their writing, there is an example of a brigand being brought to justice in the *forum*, soon to be submitted to torture and finally executed by sword (Dionisotti 1982, 104–105, lines 74–75).

82 *CIL* 2.2968; *CIL* 2.3479; *CIL* 3.1559; *CIL* 3.8242; *CIL* 3.8830; *CIL* 13.3689; Shaw 1984, 10; van Hooff 1988, 115; Grünewald 2004, 24.

83 van Hooff 1988, 111. See also *Aesopica*, 152 (Perry); Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 79.40.4.

84 Galen *De anatomicis administrationibus*, 1.2 (Kühn II, p. 221–222).

85 Shaw 1984, 20. It has to be emphasised that banditry was only one of the capital crimes for which one could be sentenced to death by crucifixion. The same sentence would await, for example, murderers (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.14) and temple-robbers (Phaedrus *Fabulae*, *Appendix Perottina*, 15).

86 Shaw 1984, 21; Coleman 1990, 48–49.

87 *Digesta*, 48.19.28.15.

88 Aubert 2002, 113.

89 Granger Cook 2014, 55.

90 See also Seneca the Elder *Controversiae*, 8.4.1.

91 Petronius *Satyrica*, 111–112. A closely related story, also originally oral, is found in Phaedrus. In this narrative, it is also emphasised that the Roman authorities actively tried to hinder relatives from taking down the dead to provide them with a proper burial: "Soldiers were stationed as guards over the corpses so that no-one would be able to take down their remains" (Phaedrus *Fabulae*, *Appendix Perottina*, 15).

92 Juvenal *Saturae*, 14.77–78.

93 Lucan *De bello civile*, 6.544–553. Besides being denied proper burial, mutilation of the body was in itself seen as terrifying (Aubert 2002, 113).

94 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.22.5; *ibid*, 6.30; Lollianus *Phoinikika*, B1 *verso*; Winkler 1980, 158–159. It is worthy of note that some amulets which were thought to be able to protect the wearer from ghosts at night, were also thought to safeguard those travelling at night against the dangers of brigands (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 28.29.115; *Cyranides* 3.3.5; Winkler 1980, 159).

95 Lollianus *Phoinikika*, B1 *verso*. This text is preserved in a second century AD papyrus manuscript.

96 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 6.30.

97 Petronius *Satyrica*, 134. Burriss 1935, 39; *Der Neue Pauly*, s.v. "Suizid"; Granger Cook 2014, 91.

98 Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.434–439; Ogden 2002, 146.

99 Ovid *Fasti*, 6.135–136.

100 Ogle 1911, 254, 262–263.

101 Ogle 1911, 254.

102 See, for instance, Pliny the Elder, who mentions in different contexts the deposition of the head of a python (*Naturalis historia*, 29.20.67) and the genitals of a dog (*ibid*, 30.24.82).

103 Ovid *Fasti*, 6.155; *ibid*. 6.165, discussed in Chapter 5.1.

104 Burriss 1931, 58–59.

105 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 34.44.151.

106 See the discussion concerning witches in general in Spaeth 2014, 54–55.

107 Spaeth 2014, 45.

108 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.184.

109 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 56.3.3–4.

110 Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.41–56; Horace *Satirae*, 1.8; Horace *Epodi*, 17.47–48; Ovid *Heroides*, 6.85–90.

111 See, for instance, Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 3.17 (of people murdered and of those who had been crucified). See also Spaeth 2014, 45.

112 See, for instance, Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.42–52; Horace *Satirae*, 1.8; Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 1.8; 1.10 & 9.29; Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes Maiores,* 10.19.

113 Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.41–56; Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.33.

114 Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.23–24.

115 Petronius *Satyrica*, 134.

116 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.181; Ovid *Heroides*, 6.89.

117 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.181.

118 Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 7.182; Ovid *Heroides*, 6.89; Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.24.

119 In Columella we find a description of the magical rites performed to repel vermin destroying the vegetable garden's crops, these are to be carried out by a young menstruating woman, barefoot with ungirt garments and loose hair, hair worn as if she was in *mourning* (Columella *De re rustica*, 10.357–366; see also Columella *De re rustica*, 11.3. 63–64; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 28.23.5; Rose 1933, 72).

120 Servius *In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii*, 11.93. See also Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 3.26.62; Tibullus *Elegiae*, 3.2.11; Ovid *Fasti*, 4.854; Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae*, 14 [= *Moralia*, 367a–c]; Lucian *De Luctu*, 12. Sterbenc Erker 2011, 44. As pointed out by Valerie Hope, mourning meant the reversal of the way a woman would both act and appear: "… dark clothing, unadorned dress, grubby, and dishevelled demeanour and dramatic noisy gestures" (Hope 2011, 186). Normally she would wear clothes in pale colours, cleanliness was essential, and her behaviour would be controlled.

121 Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.278–301.

122 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.15.

8.3

123 Being outside the formal and religious boundaries of the city, yet an integrated extension of urban area, the urban periphery had an ambiguous status in the Roman mind (Champlin 1982, 97). This liminal zone was thought to be inherently dangerous after dark (see the discussion in Doroszewska 2017), and, as we shall see, it was associated with perils of several kinds: of natural and supernatural character alike.

124 Jashemski 1970–1971, 99–100; Scullard 1981, 74.

125 Rome's oldest law – the *Law of the Twelve Tables* – made this regulation manifest (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 10.3), and this continued until the Imperial period (Paulus *Sententiae*, 1.21.3; Toynbee 1996 [1971], 48; Lindsay 2000, 169–170).

126 Armini 1929, 205–207; Champlin 1982, 101; Hope 2000, 123. In an impressive study of suburbs in Roman antiquity, Edward Champlin makes the case that suburban life was above all an elite one. In close proximity to the city of Rome were *horti*, the pleasant and lush gardens of the wealthy. Further away – in some cases at quite some distance – one would find suburban villas, owned by the same elite (Champlin 1982; see also Goodman 2007, ch. 2). The contrasting picture we paint of the urban periphery – as one associated with the most marginalised in society – has of course to do with the fact that we focus on the area in close proximity to the city and to the specific contexts we discuss (i.e., crossroads, cemeteries and inns). In other words, these pictures are by no means mutually exclusive, quite the contrary, they are complementary.

127 Jashemski 1970–1971, 99.

128 Helttula 1995, 147–150; Hansen 1998, 329.

129 See e.g. the inscription on the tomb of the poet Pacuvius (Pacuvius, cit. Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae,* 1.24.4).

130 Hope 2000, 122–123.

131 Jashemski 1970–1971, 100.

132 *Digesta*, 47.12.3.11.

133 *Bustuariae moechae*: Martial *Epigrammata*, 1.34.8; *ibid* 3.93.14–15; Juvenal *Saturae*, 6. *O* 14–*O* 16; Herter 1960, 86; Adams 1983, 334. Ray Laurence has pointed to the fact that much street prostitution took place in areas isolated from other activities, places well-known for the population, yet being out of sight (Laurence 1994, 73). It has, however, to be stressed that most prostitution took place at brothels (Flemming 1999, 43), and these were situated in the city centre, often close to baths, inns or situated near the city's gates (McGinn 2002, 30–31).

134 Catullus *Carmina*, 59.

135 Martial *Epigrammata*, 1.34.8; Adams 1983, 333–334. This generic term can be compared with the nick-names given to individual prostitutes, names of either predatory animals noted for their aggressiveness, or fearful mythical

creatures and monsters (see the discussion in Chapter 7.3).

136 The above mentioned Rufa performs *fellatio* – or oral sex – and it is insinuated that she also had incestuous sex (Catullus *Carmina*, 59; Nappa 1999, 332). *Fellatio* was regarded as unclean (Martial *Epigrammata*, 9.4; Richlin 1992, 26–27; Skinner 2005, 18). It was a sexual act specifically associated with prostitutes, as testified in both literary and epigraphic sources (Catullus *Carmina*, 99.10; Martial *Epigrammata*, 4.84; *CIL* 4.2273; *CIL* 4.2471; Adams 1982, 131; Clark 1998, 219–220).

137 Martial *Epigrammata*, 3.93. 14–15.

138 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 4.18; Hope 2000, 125.

139 Felton 1999a, 10; Ogden 2002, 146. On the importance of placing the deceased in an appropriate tomb, see, for example, *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Culex* 385–396.

140 See, for instance, Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.

141 Horace *Epodi*, 17.47–48.

142 Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.19; see also Tibullus *Elegiae*, 1.2.42–52; Freudenburg 1995, 210; Stratton 2007, 71–72.

143 See, for example, Ovid *Heroides*, 6.89–90.

144 This former burial ground in the Esquiline region of Rome was turned into a pleasant park in the 30s BC, yet Horace portrays it as a dangerous place evoking dread and outright fear. It was disfigured by the bones of the deceased, single tombs of noble families still stood tall, it was the abode of birds and wild beasts, and after sunset it was the haunt of horrendous hags, and, moreover, also thieves (see Marguerite Johnsons' interesting discussion of the Gardens of Maecenas as a *Landscape of fear*: Johnson 2012). In all probability, this park – much like a cemetery – was perceived as pleasant during the day, whereas at night it was deemed frightening and dangerous.

145 Horace *Satirae*, 1.8.23–36.

146 Lucan *De bello civili*, 6. See also Ogden 2001, xix.

147 Graf 1997, 96–101.

148 Pharr 1932, 279; Luck 1985, 18; Gager 1992, 18–19.

149 d'Ambra 2007, 348–349.

150 *CIL* 4.3413; *CIL* 4.8899; *CIL* 6.13740; Petronius *Satyrica*, 71.8.

151 Helttula 1995, 151; Milnor 2014, 64–65.

152 *CIL* 4.8899.

153 Roads were important not only as routes of travel and transport, but also as boundaries of property. They served an administrative purpose and carried a symbolic meaning (Adams Holland 1937, 436), but do not appear to have been regarded as liminal.

154 Johnston 1991, 217.

155 Green 2007, 128.

156 Plutarch *De superstitione*, 10 [= *Moralia*, 170b].

157 Burriss 1935, 39. Nails from crucifixions, nails that still had flesh hanging on them, were used for magical purposes by witches (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 3.17).

158 To Hecate, see Johnston 1991, 219; to Diana *Trivia*: Ennius *Tragedies*, frag. 127; Varro *De lingua Latina*, 7.16; Green 2007, 128. To *triformis dea*: O'Neil 1958, 2.

159 Johnston 1991, 217.

160 Petronius *Satyrica*, 134.

161 The Latin terminology concerning establishments we would term "tavern" and "inn" respectively was far from clear-cut (Frier 1977, 32).

162 Petronius *Satyrica*, 79; *ibid*, 81; *Digesta*, 20.2.4.1; Robinson 1992, 135–136.

163 Armini 1929, 207.

164 Casson 1974, 201.

165 Galen *De alimentorum facultatibus*, 3.1; see also below.

166 *CIL* 4.3494; Martial *Epigrammata*, 5.84; Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae*, 14.25.

167 Evidence demonstrating that prostitution was commonplace in bars and inns is found in the literary works (Horace *Epistulae*, 1.14.21; Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.162; *ibid*, 11.153), in legal works (*Digesta*, 3.2.4.2; *ibid*, 23.2.43), and in the epigraphical record (*CIL* 4.8442; *CIL* 4.10675; *CIL* 9.2689). Kleberg 1942, 27–28; McGinn 2002, 32.

168 *CIL* 4.3494 – A fresco of men having fought in a bar, being thrown out by the proprietor, at the Bar of Salvius, Pompeii.

See also Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae*, 14.25.

169 The dregs of society: Catullus *Carmina*, 37; Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.171–178; Seneca the Younger *De providentia*, 5.4. There is little to suggest that these disparaging views on taverns were shared by the majority of the population, the sheer number of bars that archaeological evidence has brought to light in Pompeii demonstrates that these must have been frequented by a not insignificant part of the population (see Ellis 2004, 374–375, 383, fig. 2.). While some authors stress that taverns had only simple chairs or shared reclining couches (Martial *Epigrammata*, 5.70; Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.178), archaeological finds suggest that some places must have been upmarket, like the Caupona of Euxinus in Pompeii, which had an adjoining garden with what must have been a most pleasant pergola (see Jashemski 1967).

170 Horace *Satirae*, 2.4.61–62.

171 Cicero *In Pisonem*, 6.13; Horace *Epistulae*, 1.14.21; Juvenal *Saturae*, 11.81.

172 Marc Antony was accused by Cicero of having wasted his life in bars and brothels (Cicero *Orationes Philippicae*, 13.24), and a number of others met similar allegations (Cicero *In Pisonem*, 6.13, 8.18; Cicero *In Catilinam*, 2.4). From a legal perspective, at least in later laws, bars were considered places of ill-repute (*Digesta*, 4.8.21.11).

173 Seneca the Younger *De vita beata*, 7.3; Kleberg 1942, 25.

174 Horace *Satirae*, 1.5.1–3.

175 Kleberg 1942, 38; Casson 1974, 197–200; Crook 1976 [1967], 226; see also *Digesta*, 4.9.1.1.

176 *Digesta*, 4.9.1. pr; Crook 1976 [1967], 226. See also Casson 1974, 204–205; Robinson 1992, 135–136.

177 For government officials travelling there were publicly run establishments (Casson 1974, 197), but the inns discussed here are those that catered to all travellers.

178 *CIL* 9.2689; *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Copa*, 1.

179 Plautus *Pseudolus*, 658–59; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7; *ibid,* 21; Petronius *Satyrica*, 95. In Roman literature there are numerous depictions of old women which are disparaging (see for example Richlin 1984, 67–68; Richlin 1992, 109–114; Harlow & Laurence 2002, 127).

180 *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Copa*, 1–4. Women innkeepers are assumed to be former prostitutes in Roman legislative texts, as in Constantine the Great's Decree from AD 336, stating that high-ranking men who married women of lesser repute, including female innkeepers or innkeeper's daughters, would suffer *infamia* (*Codex Iustinianus*, 5.27.1).

181 *CIL* 9.2689; *Digesta*, 23.2.43 [= *Lex Julia et Papia*, dating to the Augustan period]; McGinn 2002, 14.

182 *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Copa*, 20. The deities Ceres, Amor and Bromius were metaphors for bread, love and wine. In the same work it is described how the weary traveller will be kissing a beautiful girl while drinking wine in the garden (*ibid*, 33).

183 Cicero *De inventione rhetorica*, 2.14–15; Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.57; Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.159–161; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9; Petronius *Satyrica*, 95; Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 1.7 ext. 10.

184 Horace *Satirae*, 1.5.4; Petronius *Satyrica*, 95.

185 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.17.

186 Horace *Satirae*, 1.1.29; Martial *Epigrammata*, 13.11.

187 *Aesopica,* 419. The order of clauses in the first paragraph has been adjusted to yield more fluent English.

188 This story has many similarities with the werewolf story in Petronius' *Satyrica* – the so-called Niceros story (Petronius *Satyrica*, 61.3–62.14).

189 Galen *De alimentorum facultatibus*, 3.1.

190 See the discussion concerning the emotional reactions to cannibalism in Kaster 2005, 110.

191 Cicero *De inventione rhetorica*, 2.14.

192 Horace *Epodi*, 5.37–38; Horace *Satirae*, 1.8; Lucan *De bello civili*, 6.451–454; Lucian *Dialogi meretricii*, 4.4–5; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 5.22 & 5.26; Dickie 2000, 580–581.

193 Everyone standing in her way or displeasing her fell victim to her

magic: former lovers, other innkeepers competing with her, and so on (see, for example, Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.9).

194 Lucan *De bello civili*, 6.451–454; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 30.6; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 5.26.

195 Augustine *De civitate Dei*, 18.18: this passage specifically refers to Apuleius' work *Metamorphoses*, but it lets us know that it was generally known under the name *Asinus aureus*, i.e., *the Golden Ass*.

196 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7; *ibid,* 1.5; Casson 1974, 209.

197 From Tarragona, Spain: *ILS* 6039.

198 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.71.154; Petronius *Satyrica*, 98; *SHA Hadrianus*, 16.3. See also *Acta Ioannis* 61 (an abandoned inn). The sources suggest that bed-bugs constituted a problem also in private dwellings, of the poor in particular (Martial *Epigrammata*, 11.32), and there were different ways of dealing with the problem (Varro *De re rustica*, 1.2.25; Palladius *Opus agriculturae*, 1.35.4).

199 Friedländer 1908–1913, vol. 1, 292.

200 *CIL* 4.4957, compare with Martial *Epigrammata*, 14.119.

201 On prostitutes as dishonest by definition, see Edwards 1997, 66–67. It must be stressed that they were regarded as dishonest despite the fact that prostitution was legal (Flemming 1999, 54).

202 Banditry was in contrast not only condemned, it was – of course – prohibited and in every way prosecuted by society (van Hooff 1988, 111; Nippel 1995, 101; Grünewald 2004, 22).

203 Olson 2006, 192–193; see also Stone 1994, 13; Sebasta 1994, 50.

204 On prostitutes as heavy drinkers, see Plautus *Curculio*, 76; Plautus *Pseudolus*, 221. The sources are of an early date, but, given that many barmaids were semi-prostitutes, it seems plausible that they may have developed alcoholism. Brigands are often described as excessive drinkers in the ancient novels (see Hopwood 1998, 197).

8.4

205 Inns were privately run, but open to the public (see Chapter 8.3). Harbours were public from both a practical perspective and in a legal sense (*Digesta*, 1.8.4.1).

206 Ahmed 2004, 13, 91–92.

207 Male innkeepers are often portrayed as deceitful, watering down the drinks (*CIL* 4.3498; Martial *Epigrammata*, 1.56), and as dishonest, making deals with thieves (Babrius *Fabulae*, 83; Martial *Epigrammata*, 13.11; see also *Digesta*, 3.2.4.2; *ibid*, 4.9.1.1; *ibid*, 47.5.). Female innkeepers were accused of being witches who turned unsuspecting victims into beasts of burden (Augustine *De civitate Dei*, 18.18). One source even accuses innkeepers of serving human flesh (Galen *De alimentorum facultatibus*, 3.1).

208 Prostitutes had a low social standing and were stigmatized in society (Edwards 1997, 66–68; Flemming 1999, 44). In his book on how to interpret dreams, Artemidorus compares brothels to cemeteries – as places common to all men – for, like inns, they were privately owned, but open to the public (Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 78).

209 See, for instance, Juvenal's diatribe on the moral decline that the Greeks brought to Roman society and how much he detests the responsible *Greeklings* (Juvenal *Saturae,* 3.58–78).

210 Sailors were clearly of a low social standing: the poet Juvenal describes the dregs of society who frequent a dodgy bar in which, alongside sailors, one could find thieves, run-away slaves and coffin-makers (Juvenal *Saturae*, 8.171–178). In Petronius' *Satyrica*, the sailors on a ship listening to a lewd story are portrayed as a crude lot (Petronius *Satyrica*, 110-113; see also Chapter 2.2). The same law that made innkeepers responsible for any thefts made on their premises applied to the owner or lessee of a ship (*Digesta* 47.5). This suggests that thefts were not uncommon on ships, and that sailors were regarded as less than honest.

211 Muleteers were equally of a low social standing, often slaves (Seneca the Younger *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, 47.15), and to fraternise with them like the emperor Vitellius did was frowned

upon (Suetonius *Vitellius,* 7). Plutarch compares muleteers – who, he suggests, were often drunk – with innkeepers and sailors (Plutarch *De Cohibenda Ira*, 12 [= *Moralia*, 460F-461A]). Petronius in turn describes muleteers as *vile* and places them in the same category as gladiators (Petronius *Satyrica*, 126). Sources suggest muleteers were sometimes suspected of stealing the mules' barley (Martial *Epigrammata*, 13.11).

212 This was an unskilled and lowly type of work (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.7; Temin 2014, 109).

213 Ahmed 2004, 92.

214 Cicero, *De re publica*, 2.4.7–9; Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 8.4–5; Graverini 2002, 59–60; Hamel 2003, ix–x; *ibid*, 3–5; McClure 2003, 140–142.

215 Cicero *De re publica*, 2.4.

Notes to Chapter 9

1 For instance, drowning at sea and as a consequence not receiving a proper burial is a recurrent theme in Roman literature (Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.333–373; Propertius *Elegiae*, 3.7.5–10; 7.55–64).

2 Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.325–330.

3 Normally it was the closest kin that took responsibility for the burial and commemoration of the deceased (Saller & Shaw 1984, 126), a duty which was based on both moral and legal grounds (*Digesta*, 11.7.14.8), lest the testament indicated another person to be assigned this task (*Digesta*, 11.7.12.4). If the deceased had been a member of a *collegium*, it would arrange and pay for the burial in case the deceased lacked family or other relations, or, if he or she had a family, reimburse them for the funeral costs (Patterson 1992, 23).

4 Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.57; Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 1.7 ext. 10; Aelian frag., 84a, Domingo–Forasté.

5 Collison-Morley 1969 [1912], 62.

6 Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index*, E 231; see also af Klintberg 2010, 69 (legend type C109).

7 Felton 1999a, 43, 52–53.

8 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.5.

9 Felton 1999a, 65.

10 Anderson 1976, 28.

9.1

11 Felton 1999a, 81; Ogden 2007, 215.

12 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.6.

13 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.18; Keulen 2007, 337.

14 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.19. As stressed by scholars such as Franz Cumont, Debbie Felton and Daniel Ogden, the fact that the body of a deceased person had been buried was in itself not sufficient to ensure that the spirit came to rest: proper funerary rituals had to be performed (Cumont 1922, 64; Felton 1999a, 10; Ogden 2002, 146). For a good overview of what these rites consisted of, see Toynbee 1996 [1971], 43–51. As pointed out by Valerie Hope, the purpose of performing these funerary rites were several: "… to placate restless spirits, to remove a potential source of infection and to reintegrate the survivors into the world of the living. But the appropriate disposal of the corpse also sprung from a sense of human compassion …" (Hope 2000, 105).

15 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13; *ibid*, 1.19. Denying or depriving a person of proper funerary rites and a grave appears to have been a significant part of capital punishment (Aubert 2002, 113), and, in the words of Valerie Hope, it was: "… the ultimate sanction and ultimate display of power" (Hope 2000, 116). This is suggested by a number of passages in the ancient literature. In Phaedrus' fables, for instance, we find a story in which soldiers guard crucified convicts so that their relatives cannot take down the dead bodies, thereby denying them burial (Phaedrus *Fabulae*, *Appendix Perottina*, 15; see also Petronius *Satyrica*, 111). We find an interesting passage in Pseudo-Quintilian, which suggests that parricides could be punished by being denied a final resting place: a grave (Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes minores*, 299; see also Ovid *Ibis*, 161–168). This form of punishment was not only imposed on ordinary criminals, it was also used as a form of "political" punishment, in purging political enemies. Those involved in Sejanus' treason against the emperor Tiberius (reigned AD 14–37) were executed, their

bodies were guarded so that no relatives could lament or bury them. Instead they were left to rot, after which they were dumped in the river Tiber (Tacitus *Annales*, 6.19). See also the discussion in Chapter 8.2.

16 The adultery-tales in Book 9 of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* – of which "The Tale of the Miller's Wife" (9.14–9.31) is one – in our view constitute an interplay between oral traditions and popular culture. An indication of the oral origin of these adultery tales is that the main narrator, Lucius the ass, introduces it by beginning to tell it in the manner of a storyteller: "Finally, I have decided to bring an embellished story, better than the others, agreeably to your ears. And see, I begin!" (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.14; see Chapter 2.4 for a discussion on how to identify oral traditions in literary works). Equally there are clear references to popular culture, and Stephen Harrison has put forward convincing arguments for a relation with Roman theatrical traditions, namely what he terms adultery-mimes (Harrison 2006, 23–24).

17 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.14 & 9.29–31.

18 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.29. The basis of the miller's decision to divorce was not merely emotional (Hijmans *et al*. 1995, 386); from a legal perspective it was mandatory to divorce a wife who had committed adultery (*Digesta*, 48.5.2.2; see the discussion in Hijmans *et al*. 1995, 249–250).

19 Those who had suffered a violent death – such as committing suicide by hanging or by other means – were believed to become restless ghosts. See, for instance, Lucian *Philopseudes*, 29 (hanging); Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes maiores*, 10.16 (by sword); Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.434–439 (suicide in general).

20 Wailing was an important part of the rituals performed, see for example Lucian *De Luctu*, 12; Toynbee 1996 [1971], 44; Sterbenc Erker 2011, 49. Washing the body, and anointing it with scented oils were essential elements in these burial rites, see for instance Lucian *De Luctu*, 11; Toynbee 1996 [1971], 44. It was normally the female relatives of the deceased who were in charge of the preparation of the body (Sterbenc Erker 2011, 47); in the case of the miller it was probably other women who performed this, as the daughter of the miller only arrived the following day (Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.31).

21 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.31. The idea that the dead who had not received funerary rites would become fearful ghosts is found in both Greek (Johnston 1999, xvii–xix, 9) and Roman culture (Ogden 2002, 146).

22 Under normal circumstances, undue haste in performing the funerary rites would have been considered disrespectful (Noy 2011, 13).

23 *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Culex*, 206–216.

24 *Appendix Virgiliana*, *Culex*, 390–400.

25 The death of Socrates can be regarded as the very opposite of what was regarded as a "good death" by the Romans. A "good death" was dying at an advanced age, without too much suffering and pain, in one's own home, being surrounded by one's relatives (Noy 2011, 1–4). The fate of Socrates embodies what many Romans feared: a too early and lonely death, far from home, wedded wife and children, a death characterised by violence and lacking any type of dignity. An example of a person not receiving the appropriate funerary rites, and therefore returning as a restless spirit, was the emperor Caligula (reigned AD 37–41). He was hastily, and only partially, cremated; hence he returned to haunt the house in which he had been slain (Suetonius *Caligula*, 59; Hope 2000, 106). Restless spirits of those who died without receiving proper funerary rites were thought to roam the face of the earth for a hundred years, as they were unable to enter the Underworld (Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.325–330). A hundred years symbolically represented the full span of a life (Ogden 2002, 148), and a passage in Tertullian makes it clear that the spirits of the deceased were thought to remain restless spirits for the remainder of the period which they would have lived, had they not met their death prematurely (Tertullian *De Anima*, 56).

26 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.6.

27 Jack Winkler, among several other scholars, has suggested that this description of Socrates is a form of hyperbole (Winkler 1980, 163, note 36),

whereas we are of a different opinion. On philosophers portrayed as pale-faced misers, see Keulen 2003, 111–112; see also Keulen 2007, 162. For further discussion, see Chapter 7.1.

28 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.6 & 9.30. Ghosts were usually described as either pale white or pitch black, see for instance Lollianus *Phoinikika*, B1 *verso* (robbers dressed as ghosts); Lucian *Philopseudes*, 32 (young men dressed up as ghosts, trying to scare the philosopher Democritus of Abdera, who did not believe in ghosts); Plutarch *Cimon*, 1.3 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 479] (young men dressed up as ghosts); Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes Maiores,* 10.1 (black); Seneca the Younger *Oedipus*, 583–598 (pale white). The pallor typically associated with ghosts reflects the lifeless and bloodless colour of the corpse; in contrast the sooty, black colour is that of a body that has been burnt on the funerary pyre (Collison Morley 1969 [1912], 6, 16; Winkler 1980, 162; Russell 1981, 196; Felton 1999a, 14–15).

29 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.29.

30 Thaniel 1973, 182–183. For example, the gory ghost of Remus, having met a violent death by the hand of his very own brother, Romulus, is called *umbra* by Ovid (*Fasti*, 5.451).

31 Apuleius *De deo Socratis*, 15.

9.2

32 Cicero *De divinatione*, 1.57. Another text to be found in the works of Cicero resembles this one: a murder takes place at an inn, the inn-keeper murders and robs one of two friends travelling together at night. But in this case, both slept at the inn, and it contains no supernatural elements (Cicero *De inventione rhetorica*, 2.14–15).

33 Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 1.7 ext. 10.

34 Aelian frag., 82, Domingo-Forasté.

35 Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, 1.7 ext. 10. The translation is slightly adjusted to clarify who does what and to make the plot of the narrative more intelligible.

36 As we have seen in Chapter 8.3, inns evoked a number of emotions – not merely dread and fear – but also a degree of disgust.

37 Aelian frag., 84a, Domingo–Forasté.

38 The cart was loaded with dung – *stercus*, a Latin word denoting human *and* animal excrement (Adams 1982, 236–237; see also Patterson 2000, 93) – and presumably an inn produced large quantities of dung and refuse which were necessary to remove. *Stercorarii*, the workmen responsible for this removal, would be remunerated for emptying cesspits and containers used for the same purpose (*CIL* 4.10606; Jansen 2000, 43; Hobson 2009, 96), and quite possibly these were also paid by farmers and gardeners who used the manure (Taylor 2005, 56–57). There was an extensive use of manure in agriculture, both human excrement (Columella *De re rustica*, 2.14.2; *ibid*, 2.14, 8; *ibid*, 5.10.10; *ibid*, 5.10.15; *ibid*, 11.3.12; Varro *De re rustica*, 1.2, 21; *ibid*, 1.38.2), and to a greater extent also animal dung and bird droppings (from pigeons and other birds) (see for instance Cato the Elder *De agricultura*, 36; Columella *De re rustica*, 2.14.1; Varro *De re rustica*, 1.38.2; Palladius *Opus agriculturae*, 1.33.1). While some of the human excrement used as manure would have been produced by the workforce living at these large-scale farms, the quantities of manure recommended by the agricultural writers seem to suggest that this had to come from an outside source, most likely it was transported there from nearby cities. The specific transport in the story discussed was leaving Megara in the early hours of the morning; in the City of Rome, heavy transport was normally prohibited during day-time, but carts carrying dung were exempt from this law (*Tabula Heracleensis*, 16), suggesting that the scale of these transports was quite significant.

39 Felton 1999a, 8–9.

40 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 8.5 & 8.8.

41 Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.31.

9.3

42 Plautus *Mostellaria*.

43 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.

44 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 30–31.

45 Closely related to these three stories are two other stories of late date from Christian contexts in Constantius of Lyon's *Life of St Germanus* (*De Vita sancti Germani*, 2.10) and Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* (*Dialogi,* 3.4.1–3; for discussion of these, see Ogden 2007, 209–213). Alongside these lengthy stories, there are a number of other examples of stories of haunted houses. For instance, there are the buildings the murdered emperor Caligula was thought to haunt in the city of Rome (Suetonius *Caligula*, 59; see Chapter 7.1), and a bath in Phocis, Greece, in which a certain Damon met a violent death, and hence returned to haunt (Plutarch *Cimon*, 1.6–7 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 479]).

46 Humour is found in many ghost stories and, as pointed out by Debbie Felton (1999a, 3–4), humour works as a kind of catharsis: "… a way of dealing with the disturbing reality of death" (*ibid*, 4).

47 Felton 1999a, 43; Duckworth 2015 [1952], 53.

48 Felton 1999a, 62, 77.

49 It is clearly set somewhere in the city as one of the main characters – Tranio – speaks of going to Piraeus to buy fish (Plautus *Mostellaria*, 66).

50 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.5.

51 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 30.

52 See, for example, Nardi 1960; Felton 1999a, esp. chapter 3; Felton 1999b.

53 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 135–155.

54 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 496–504.

55 This is a theme found in Euripides' (480s–407/6 BC) *Hecuba*, in which Polydorus is murdered and bereaved of his gold by his host Polymestor, and quite possibly Plautus had Euripides' play in mind when writing *Mostellaria* (Felton 1999b, 127–128). Compare, for instance, with the opening scene in which Polydorus' ghost enters and tells of his dreadful fate (Euripides *Hecuba*, 1–13). For a critical discussion concerning Euripidean influence on Attic Middle Comedy, Attic New Comedy and Roman Comedy, see Duckworth 2015 [1952], 33–38.

56 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 481–482.

57 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 498 & 503; Felton 1999a, 47. Hiding the corpse in the house was, of course, a way of concealing the crime committed. But to the viewer of the play, another aspect would also have been apparent, namely that Roman law forbade burial within the ritual boundary (*pomerium*) of a city (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 10.3; Paulus *Sententiae*, 1.21.3; Toynbee 1996 [1971], 48; Lindsay 2000, 169–170).

58 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 508–509. As we have seen in the preceding subchapters – 9.1 & 9.2 – ghosts either appear in dreams (where they can talk) or as apparitions (which can make noises). Tranio who makes up the story on spot does not have the time to consider such details.

59 Felton 1999b, 123–124, 129, 137.

60 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 498: "… *hic habito, …"*, "here I shall live"; Felton 1999a, 6–7.

61 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 353–361.

62 Parker 1989, 233.

63 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 27.1–2.

64 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.5–11. The translation is slightly adjusted to clarify who does what as well as some of the actions performed.

65 The identity of the philosopher Athenodorus is unknown; it could be any of three Stoic philosophers, or none, as the name "the gift of Athens" to a man who helps to rid Athens of a frightening ghost is most probably meant as a pun (Felton 1999a, 67) – not by Pliny the Younger though, who appears to have taken the matter seriously. A.N. Sherwin-White suggests that it might be the late Republican Stoic from Tarsus (Sherwin-White 1966, 436, see: *RE*, s.v. "Athenodoros" no. 19, col. 2045). Debbie Felton argues that it might be the latter, or an earlier Stoic philosopher, also from Tarsus, who came to Rome in 70 BC (Felton 1999a, 67; see: *RE*, s.v. "Athenodoros" no. 18, col. 2045). There is, in fact, yet another Stoic philosopher by the name of Athenodoros (of Soli): a disciple of Zeno, who lived in the third century BC (*RE*, s.v. "Athenodoros" no. 17, col. 2044). The Stoics did not doubt that ghosts existed, nor did the Pythagoreans – in contrast to the Epicureans – so making a Stoic philosopher hero of the story must have been natural (Felton 1999a, 21).

66 Notices were put up in town to announce that a place was for rent as demonstrated

by both literary evidence (Petronius *Satyrica*, 38) and *dipinti* found on the walls of Pompeii (Frier 1977, 27). Similar notices were also put up concerning other edifices for rent, for instance one advertising an inn (*CIL* 4.807).

67 See, for instance, Juvenal *Saturae*, 3.161; *ibid*, 3.217–218. Literary evidence concerning the city of Rome show that a majority of people could not afford to buy an apartment or house, instead they rented accommodation on a long-term or short-term basis (Frier 1977, 27–29).

68 An essential part of ancient philosophy was the ability to control one's emotions, as argued among others by Cicero: "… for philosophy has this effect: it heals souls, removes vain anxieties, liberates from desires and banishes fears" (Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 2.11). We find the same theme in Lucian's *Philopseudes*, 30–32, with the philosopher Arignotus demonstrating tranquillity in dealing with a ghost and *empousa* (see the discussion below). These can in turn be compared to the story of how the philosopher Apollonius sees through the disguises of a demon – an *empousa* – and calmly forces her to disclose her hideous intentions and true nature (Flavius Philostratus *Vita Apollonii*, 4.25; for further discussion, see Chapter 7.2).

69 It was not unusual for philosophers, and other intellectuals such as poets, to make use of the quiet hours of the night working in the light of lamps (and, if nothing else, to give others the impression that one sat toiling with intellectual work) (Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 1.143-144; Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 10.3.27; Anderson 1961, 4–5; Ker 2004, 209–210; McGill 2014, 124; see also Chapter 8.1).

70 *Lemuria*: Ovid *Fasti*, 5.419–492; Scullard 1981, 118–119.

71 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 15.

72 Compare, for instance, with the description of a ghost in Seneca the Younger's *Oedipus*, 623–626. Quite possibly the ghost and the philosopher resembled each other, the latter often being described as pale and emaciated with long unkempt hair and a huge beard (Zanker 1995, 32–33; on the similarities in appearance of ghosts and philosophers, see also Chapter 7.1). Not all ghosts are described in this manner, however; in Phlegon of Tralles' (second century AD) *Book of Marvels*, a young girl, Philinnion, returns from her grave, despite having been duly mourned and buried. As she manages to seduce a young man, Machates, a guest in the house, this suggests that she was still very attractive (Phlegon of Tralles *Miracula*, 1). She haunts her home in a quest for happiness and love (Hansen 1996, 72; see also Hansen 1980 for a discussion of this text).

73 Ghost is imprisoned houseguest: Felton 1999a, 70. Ghost is chained slave: Chain gangs were a natural part of the work force at these large agricultural estates: Columella *De re rustica*, 11.1.22.

74 Tranio fears being sent to chain gang (Plautus *Mostellaria*, 18–19).

75 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 743.

76 Roth 2012, 746–747.

77 For maltreatment, see Bradley 1994, 28; for capital punishments, *ibid*, 65.

78 Pseudo-Quintilian *Declamationes Maiores*, 10.2 & 10.7–8.

79 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.5.6.

80 Lucian's story may have been inspired by Pliny the Younger's: Anderson 1976, 28; Felton 1999a, 81.

81 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 1. Lucian's critique of these lovers of lies – which is hard, bordering on being fierce – includes philosophers (*ibid*, 5–7). These are men who hide the fact that they are superstitious charlatans behind impressive beards (*ibid*, 5).

82 In our view, Lucian was very deliberate in stressing that the house was situated in an area known for its tombs, Kraneion, a place fitting for stories about haunted houses and angered ghosts. For a description of Kraneion, see Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 2.2.4. Corinth was also the scene of one of the best-known ghost stories of antiquity, Herodotus' (*c.* 484–*c.* 420 BC) story of Melissa, wife of the Corinthian tyrant Periander (Herodotus *Historiae*, 5.92; which is also parodied by Lucian *Philopseudes*, 27).

83 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 30.

84 This part echoes Plautus' *Mostellaria* (498) when the ghost claims to be the rightful inhabitant of the house.

85 According to ancient traditions, a number of philosophers were preoccupied with magic, including Pythagoras, and there are even spells in his name found in the *Greek Magical Papyri*, i.e., Greek texts on magic discovered in Egypt (Betz 1987, 95).

86 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 31. For other, similar, descriptions of ghosts, see Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 9.30; Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.5.

87 In a passage concerning necromantic rites earlier in Lucian's work, the chthonic goddess Hecate is raised from the Underworld, and she goes through a series of shape-shifting transformations, being first a girl, then a bull and finally a puppy (Lucian *Philopseudes*, 14).

88 In Aristophanes' play *Frogs*, there is a comic *katabasis* "journey to the Underworld" by Dionysus and his slave Xanthias, in which Xanthias sees an *empousa*. The *empousa* is first in the form of a bull, then a mule and finally a beautiful girl with one leg of copper and one of cow dung (Aristophanes *Ranae*, 288–295). It seems likely that Lucian was acquainted with and inspired by Aristophanes' text. In the Byzantine Lexicon *Suda* (compiled at the end of the tenth century AD), *empousa* is described as a "demonic ghost sent by Hecate" (*Suda*, s.v. "Εμπουσα"; see also Brown 1991, 47).

89 Lucian *Philopseudes*, 31.

9.4

90 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 7.27.6.

91 Felton 1999a, 71.

92 Diogenes Laertius *De vitae philosophorum*, 7.112–113.

93 Tacon 2001; Wallace 2004, 223–227; Thomas 2011, 175–180.

94 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.409.

95 Borgeaud 1988 [1979], 88–89, 98.

96 Cf. Felton 1999a, 71.

97 Borgeaud 1988 [1979], 89, 90, 102.

98 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 509. The typical appearance of a person struck by fear is deadly pale covered by cold sweat (see Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.152–158; Apuleius *Metamorphoses*, 1.13; Petronius *Satyrica*, 62.10 & 101. Lucian *Philopseudes*, *passim*; Luck 1985, 173).

99 Theophrastus *Characteres*, 16; Martin 2004, 18–19; cf. Felton 1999a, 5.

100 Theophrastus *Characteres*, 19.4, 19.9; Martin 2004, 26–27.

101 Martin 2004, 29.

102 Felton 1999a, 61. This stock character has an antecedent in Attic New Comedy on which Roman comedy was based (see Halliday 1930, 121–122, 125).

103 Stobaeus *Eclogae*, 2.91.6–7 Wachsmuth = *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 3.394; Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 123.16.

104 Plautus *Mostellaria*, 422–423. *Superstitio* applied to alien and subversive practices: Martin 2004, 132–139.

105 Sävborg 2009, 344–347.

106 Bowden 2008, 36, who also suggests the practices condemned by philosophers were not merely the "excesses", but even "normal" ritual practices. Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 95.35 makes this distinction concerning virtue; Martin 2004, 128.

107 Cicero *De natura deorum*, 2.28.71–72.

108 Martin 2004, 128, 134–135.

109 Felton 1999a, 21; Kemper 1993, 18. See Traver Vera 2014, who discusses the theory behind this Epicurean rejection in depth.

110 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 4.30–41.

111 Felton 1999a, 68.

112 Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 56.5.

113 Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 85.9–11. Translation slightly adjusted to make the argument clearer.

114 Seneca the Younger *De ira*, 2.2.2.

115 Galen *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 4.6.1–10. pp. 270–272 de Lacy; Annas 1994, 106–107. Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.126.

116 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.143, 156–157; *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 2.809.

117 Long 2002, 146.

118 Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton*, 8.26; Irvine 2009, 129.

119 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.116; Irvine 2009, 130.

120 Anderson 2006, 12; Kahn 2001, 142; Ogden 2002, 61–68.

121 Lucian *Alexander*.

122 Kahn 2001, 140.

123 Flinterman 2014, 342–343 *et passim*.

124 Alexander Polyhistor apud Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 8.32.

125 Gemelli Marciano 2014, 142.

126 Hermippus 1026F21 Bollansée; Iamblichus *Vita Pythagorica*, 139.

127 Ahmadi 2014, 495, n. 30; Gemelli Marciano 2014, 142.

128 Bernabé 2013, 139; Betegh 2014b, 149; cf. Betegh 2014a.

129 *Derveni Papyrus*, col. 6.2–4. Since only parts of the text are preserved, it is impossible to state with certainty that the entire text really belonged to the genre of commentary as we know it from later periods, only that the parts we possess have this quality (see Betegh 2004a, 49, who also suggests the allegorical exegesis of the author is based on the hermeneutics of oracles rather than the more usual natural and moral allegories).

130 Ogden 2002, 33.

131 Ahmadi 2014; Ferrari 2011.

132 Betegh 2004b, 78–83; Kouremenos *et al*. 2006, 167; Most 1997, 120.

133 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 30.7, 30.9.

134 Ogden 2002, 23.

135 Luck 1985, 173; Ogden 2002, 10, 155.

136 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 8.3.

137 Kahn 2001, 140.

138 Homer *Odyssea*, 9.62–66; Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.494–510.

139 *Suda*, s.v. "Περὶ ψυχαγωγίας"; Ogden 2002, 30.

9.5

140 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.12.27.

141 Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae*, 19; Luchte 2009, 6.

142 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.44.105–109. The only death exempt from this disdain is death in a shipwreck, which is labelled "harsh, to be sure", as it involves an acute sense of imminently perishing.

143 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.21.49; *ibid*, 1.43.103.

144 Plato *Phaedo*, 115c.

145 Cicero *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.43.104. In the Roman era, this fate was not uncommon (see Scobie 1986, 418–419).

146 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.189; Brennan 2009 [2003], 272. The obvious exception is suicide, which was considered legitimate in adverse circumstances, such as suffering from severe pain, mutilation or incurable illness, or as a form of sacrifice, see Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.130; Cicero *De finibus*, 3.60–61.

147 Hogg 2014, 99.

148 Epictetus *Encheiridion*, 1.1 & 2.1–2.

149 Epictetus *Encheiridion*, 3.

150 Long 2002, 249.

151 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 3.24.58; *ibid*, 3.24.86–87.

152 Long 2002, 249.

153 See e.g. Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 2.8.11–13; 2.17.23–26; Long 2002, 249.

154 Tsouna 2007, 239, 243.

155 Epicurus *Kuriai doxai*, 2; Epicurus *Epistula ad Menoeceum*, 124–125; Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.830–869. Lucretius even adduces our ability to experience bitter anxiety (*curas acris*), grief (*luctum*) and pain (*dolorem*) as evidence of the mortality of the mind (see Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.461–462).

156 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.870–893.

157 Philodemus *De morte*, 31.30–32.1.

158 Philodemus *De morte*, 32.2–15. Translation slightly adjusted to make the argument clearer.

159 Furley 1986; Nagel 1970; Nussbaum 1996.

160 Lucretius *De rerum natura*, 3.894–896.

161 Dixon 1992, 29.

162 Giddens 1996, 37; Reith 2004, 386.

163 See Savin 2011, 13–15.

164 See e.g. Brennan 2006 [2005], 235–287.

165 Winkel Holm 2012, 16.

166 Ferreira & Boholm 2002, 98.

167 On the polluted state of dead body, see Toynbee 1996 [1971], 43; Lindsay 2000.

168 Philodemus *De morte*, 25.2–10; *ibid*, 25.27–30.

169 Lindsay 2000, 169–171.

170 Hope 2000, 105.

171 Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum*, 8.1.4–5; Iamblichus *Vita Pythagorica*, 134.

172 Pythagoras' transmigrations are discussed in Casadésus Bordoy 2013, 164–167.

173 Luchte 2009, 7–8.

174 Tangherlini 2013, 52; Polkinghorne 2013, 32; af Klintberg 1999, 15–26.

175 See Tangherlini (1998, 155) for a statement of this point concerning orally transmitted ghost stories from nineteenth-century Denmark.

176 See e.g. Tangherlini 1998, 153.

177 Since the ghost has not been allowed to enter the Underworld, it has not drunk from the waters of Lethe, the river of the Underworld whose water produced forgetfulness of one's previous life (see e.g Virgil *Aeneis*, 6.714–715).

178 *Suda*, s.v. "Περὶ ψυχαγωγίας".

179 On ghosts communicating in dreams, see Felton 1999a, 18–21.

Notes to Chapter 10

1 af Klintberg 2001, 54–56.

2 "The Mexican pet": Brunvand 1986, 21–23; Brunvand 2001, 258–260; af Klintberg 2001, 209–211.

3 Brunvand 2003, 90–98; af Klintberg 2001, 49–53.

4 Mayhew 1968 [1861–62], 154–155; Boyle 1990, 204–206; discussed in Pettitt 1995.

5 Asplund Ingemark 2008.

6 This third story is not covered in Asplund Ingemark 2008.

10.1

7 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 13.6.

8 Cohen 1996, 6.

9 Felton 2012, 104.

10 Lloyd 1983, 45.

11 Suetonius *Divus Claudius*, 20; Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 60.11.1–5.

12 *OCD*, s.v. "Puteoli"; Strabo *Geographia*, 5.4.6; Purcell 1984, 319, 329.

13 Purcell 1984, 330.

14 Purcell 1984, 321–322, 335.

15 Piromallo 2004, 275.

16 See map in Camodeca 1994.

17 Curtis 2015, 179.

18 Flavius Philostratus *Peri gymnastikes*, 11; Philostratus *Imagines*, 2.6; Kyle 2014, 29; Miller 2004, 57–58.

19 Dalby 2003, 95.

20 Wilkins & Hill 2006, 143; Noy 2002 [2000], 115. In Asplund Ingemark 2008 the fish product is rendered as *garum*, i.e., fish sauce made of fermented fish, but it is more likely to have been salted small fish.

21 Étienne & Mayet 1998.

22 One way of growing vines was planting them side-by-side with trees and letting the vine grow on these (Cato *De agricultura*, 32.1–2; Columella *De re rustica*, 3.3.2), instead of using props to support them as a means to keep the grape clusters off the ground. Usually this tree was elm, poplar or ash (Columella *De re rustica*, 5.6.1–5; Palladius *Opus agriculturae*, 3.10.4), and not oak, but in all likelihood this passage refers to a tree supporting vines being pruned, for the trees on which vines were grown were also pruned (Cato *De agricultura*, 32.1–2; Columella *De re rustica*, 3.3.2; Columella *De arboribus*, 16.3). Vinedressers used pruning-knives, and, sometimes, sharp axes in pruning the vines (see Columella *De arboribus*, 10.2).

23 Bradley 1994, 32–33.

24 Two aspects of this "crime" have to be taken into consideration: the time of the deed and the fact that it involved violence. In the Republican Era – under the *Law of the Twelve Tables* – a burglar breaking into a house at night could be put to death by the victim of the crime (*Leges Duodecim Tabularum*, 2.4/8.12–13; see also Gaius *Institutiones*, 3.189; Harries 2007, 50–51, 54). In Imperial times, thefts committed at night were also more severely punished than those taking place during the day; some legal texts suggest that the *Law of the Twelve Tables* was still applicable (*Digesta,* 9.2.4.1; see also Cicero, *Pro Tullio*, 50–51). A text by the Roman jurist Gaius, however, seems to suggest that the perpetrator would normally not face death, while punishment was still severe: it could be in the form of forced labour

in the public works (*Digesta*, 47.17.1). Any crime involving violence, regardless of whether it was in the Republican or Imperial era, was regarded as very serious. Whereas petty thieves might only face fines of four or two times the value of that stolen, a thief or burglar making use of weapons or violence could be sentenced to the mines (*Digesta*, 47.17.1) or be put to death by the owner of the house (*Digesta* 9.2.4.1; see also Cicero, *Pro Tullio*, 50–51). Taking action in this manner may seem surprising, but in a society lacking the equivalence of a modern police force, law enforcement largely depended on the actions of the individuals themselves (Nippel 1995, 35; Fuhrmann 2016, 297–298).

25 Virgil *Georgica*, 3.408.

26 On Spanish thieves and bandits in the Roman period, see Curchin 1982, 34–35.

10.2

27 The word Pliny the Elder uses here is *cetarium*, fishpond, even though he is rather referring to a basin (*lacus*), a word he employs in the next clause.

28 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.48.92.

29 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 31.43.94.

30 Ponsich & Tarradell 1965, 85.

31 Oppian *Halieutica*, 308–311; Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 7.317c; Thompson 1947, 181.

32 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 9.45. While the notion of tree-living octopuses was an internet hoax created in the late 1990s (http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/; retrieved 2017-07-24) – probably inspired by Pliny the Elder's story – there is evidence that at least some species of octopods can climb out of the sea and "walk" or rather crawl on land (Mather, Anderson & Wood 2010, 15 & 126). It is not uncommon for octopod species that have their habitat in intertidal environments or near the shore to display this behaviour according to cephalopod experts. They do this either to forage, for instance for crabs captured in tidal pools, or as a means to flee predators. On the Internet, presently on YouTube, there are numerous videos bearing witness to this ability. (These are discussed by Katherine Harmon Courage in her Scientific American Blog – *Octopus Chronicles*: "Land-Walking Octopus Explained" [Video]: https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/octopus-chronicles/land-walking-octopus-explained-video/; retrieved: 2017-07-06).

33 On guard dogs, see Columella *De re rustica*, 7.12.1; Virgil *Georgica*, 3.404–414.

34 Asplund Ingemark suggested in her 2008 paper that the story of the giant octopus was inspired by a related cephalopod species: the Giant squid (*Architeuthis dux*) (Asplund Ingemark 2008, 153–154). This species occurs in the Atlantic and other oceans, but some examples have been known to enter the Western Mediterranean (Bello 2003, 215). There are recordings of single examples stranded on the beaches near the Strait of Gibraltar (Gonzáles et al. 2000). Pliny the Elder stresses the awful smell of the octopus, and this may well reflect reality. Ammonia in the tissues is used by large squid species – including Giant squid – as means to keep it buoyant. This ammonia makes both living and dead animals smell pungent (Mather, Anderson & Wood 2010, 44).

35 On the fighting style of gladiators vs. soldiers, see Barton 1993, 32, and especially note 82.

36 Meijer 2006, 100.

10.3

37 Pettitt 2004, 38.

38 Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 622a; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.35.71.

39 Detienne & Vernant 1974, ch. 2.

40 Theognis, 215–216; Plutarch *De sollertia animalium*, 27 [= *Moralia,* 978e–979a].

41 Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 7.317f; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.46.87.

42 Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazusae*, 462–463.

43 Detienne & Vernant 1974, 47–48. Cephalopods – octopuses, squids and cuttlefishes – have the highest brain-to-body masses of all invertebrates, comparable to that of "lower" vertebrates (see for instance Mather & Kuba 2013,

431). The signs of intelligence are numerous: octopuses for instance are known to be able to solve problems, in some cases to use tools, to play and indeed for having distinct personalities (Mather 2008; Finn, Tregenza & Norman 2009; Mather, Anderson & Wood 2010, 13, 113–118, 123; Mather & Kuba 2013; Kuba, Gutnick & Burghardt 2014; Mather *et al*. 2014).

44 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 7.11.

45 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 1.27.

46 Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 622a; Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 7.317b, 7.316b; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.46.86.

47 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.48.90. This information was also drawn from Trebius Niger.

48 *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, 1.756 [= Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 7.316b].

49 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.48.91.

50 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 7.11.

51 Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 524a; Detienne & Vernant 1974, 46.

52 Detienne & Vernant 1974, 46.

53 Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 8.621b.

54 Plutarch *De sollertia animalium*, 14 [= *Moralia,* 970b].

55 Plutarch *De sollertia animalium*, 8 [= *Moralia,* 965e].

56 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 1.27.

57 Artemidorus *Onirocritica*, 2.14.

10.4

58 In ancient literature, we find a number of stories about sea monsters – giant whales and sea serpents among others – which are very different in character to the story about the killer whale in Ostia (see Coulter 1926; Waugh 1961; Coleman 1983; Boardman 1987; S. West 1991; Hansen 2002, 261–262; Papadopoulos & Ruscillo 2002; Stothers 2004; Nesselrath 2005).

59 Pliny the Elder refers to this sea creature as an *orca*, and there has been some discussion of the identification of the species, but most scholars agree on it being a killer whale (*Orcinus orca*, Linnaeus 1758; see Waugh 1961, 361–362; Papadopoulos & Ruscillo 2002, 211; Nesselrath 2005, 166–167). The view that this passage refers to a killer whale is shared by a leading expert on sea mammals, Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (1987, 356). There are few accounts of the killer whale in the written sources – known as a ram-fish, or, as in this case, *orca* (Aelian *De natura animalium*, 9.49 & 15.2; Oppian *Halieutica*, 5.30; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.5.12–15; 9.67.145 & 32.53.144–145), most probably a reflection of the fact that *Orcinus orca* is relatively rare in the Mediterranean (di Natale & Mangano 1983; Notarbartolo di Sciara 1987, 356; Heyning & Dahlheim 1988, 2).

60 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.5.14–15.

61 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 9.49; *ibid*, 15.2; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.5.12. Modern research has, however, demonstrated that killer whales rarely harm or kill humans, lest they are under threat (Notarbartolo di Sciara 1977, 219), although isolated cases of attacks on humans have been reported (Heyning & Dahlheim 1988, 4).

62 Pliny the Elder's story has few parallels; however, Vicki Szabo has pointed to a possible precedent, namely an inscription of the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076 BC) recounting a hunt of *nahiru*, which means "snorter" in Assyrian, also called "horse of the sea", on the Phoenician coast (Szabo 2008, 39; Wapnish 1995, 252). The identification of these sea-dwelling animals is not clear, and several possible species have been suggested, most probably sperm whales or killer whales (Wapnish 1995, 254–260).

63 Goldsworthy 2011 [2003], 58. The Praetorian Guard is often described in terms of the Emperor's body guard (Keppie 2000, 99), but it has to be emphasised that it in fact was a sizable military unit closely connected to the Emperor and based in the City of Rome (*ibid*, 105), and should not be conflated with the Imperial German body guard that provided the personal security for the emperor (Webster 1998 [1969], 101).

64 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.5.13.

65 Goldsworthy 2011 [2003], 178–179.

66 Potter 2010 [2006], 400–401.

67 Potter 2010 [2006], 401.

68 Suetonius *Divus Claudius*, 21.6.

69 Suetonius *Divus Claudius*, 2.1–2.

70 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 60.2.6.

71 Suetonius *Divus Claudius*, 2.1–2; Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 60.2.1–2.

72 Suetonius *Divus Claudius*, 20. The necessity of constructing a port proper with piers protecting the ships seems to have engaged the emperor, who came to visit Ostia many times (Levick 2015, 127). Lacking a fully functioning and safe harbour, the city of Rome was repeatedly threatened by food shortages, and it was this threat that compelled Claudius to order the construction of it (Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 60.11. 1–5; Thornton & Thornton 1989, 77).

10.5

73 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5, 1382b15–19; Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.7.7, 1115b23–28; Konstan 2006, 133.

74 Aristotle *Rhetorica*, 2.5, 1382a5; Fortenbaugh 2002, 103; Konstan 2006, 133.

75 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.6.1, 1115a. Ross (1995 [1923], 205–207) suggested that Aristotle's courage ought to be plotted onto two systems (fear – courage – cowardice; confidence – discretion – rashness) instead of the one normally presumed in Aristotelian theory (fear – courage – confidence). The virtues of courage and discretion would both be the consequence of self-control. Urmson (1980) replaces Ross' two systems with different ones (overcaution – caution – rashness; cowardice – bravery – insensitive fearlessness); Ross is discussed but refuted by Pears (1980), who collapses the two scales into Aristotle's original one.

76 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 7.2.6, 1146a10–13; 7.9.6, 1151b32–1152a6; Pears 1980, 171; see also Urmson 1980.

77 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.7.2, 1115b11–14; 3.7.7, 1115b25–33.

78 Pears 1980, 180–181; Urmson 1980, 158.

79 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.8.2, 1116a.

80 McDonnell 2006, 62, 65–66.

81 Gowers 1995.

82 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 36.20.94; 36.24.104–106; cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Antiquitates Romanae*, 3.67.5; cf. Strabo *Geographia*, 5.3.8.

83 Murphy 2004, 193–194; Isager 1991, 198.

84 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 36.24.105–106.

85 Cicero *Pro Plancio*, 40.95.

86 Cicero *De natura deorum*, 2.56.141; Gowers 1995, 26–27.

87 Gowers 1995, 25; Liebeschuetz 2000, 57.

88 Nussbaum 2004, 88.

89 Rozin, Haidt & McCauley 2000, 640; Miller 1997, 3.

90 Miller 1997, 2.

91 Kaster 2005, 108.

92 Miller 1997, 2.

93 Miller 1997, 12.

94 Kaster 2005, 104–105.

95 Sidonius Apollinaris *Epistulae*, 3.12.2, 3.12.4; cf. Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 1.15.17.

96 Kaster 2005, 113.

97 Kaster 2005, 121.

98 Wilkins & Hill 2006, 155, 158; see also Purcell 1995, 136.

99 Varro *De re rustica*, 3.3.9–10; Columella *De re rustica*, 8.16.3–4; Seneca the Younger *Quaestiones naturales*, 3.18.2–3; Kaster 2005, 127–128.

100 Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 6.16.6.

101 Kaster 2005, 113.

102 Seneca the Younger *Epistulae*, 24.26.

103 Kaster 2005, 132.

104 See e.g. Quintilian *Institutio oratoria*, 11.1.16; Kaster 2005, 132.

105 Kaster 2005, 131.

106 Kaster 2005, 44–45.

107 Philodemus *De superbia*, 2.27.

108 Philodemus *De superbia*, 6.27–34.

109 Philodemus *De superbia*, 9.17–20.

110 Cf. Philodemus *De superbia*, 19.9, 7.28–34, 14.15–22.

10.6

111 Diocles of Carystus frag. 222 van der Eijk [= Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae*, 7.316c].

112 Philo *De Specialibus Legibus*, 4.100.

113 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.10.3, 1118a; 3.10.6–3.10.8, 1118a.

114 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.10.8, 1118a & 3.10.11, 1118b.

115 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.11.4–6, 1118b–1119a.

116 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 3.12.1–2, 1119a.

117 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 7.7.2, 1150a; 7.81–2, 1150b–1151a.

118 Philodemus *De superbia*, 5.19–26.

119 Tsouna 2007, 143–144, especially n. 2. Stoic Ariston of Chios: Ioppolo 1996.

120 Tsouna 2007, 156–158.

121 Philodemus *De superbia*, 13.8–30; Tsouna 2007, 157.

122 Philodemus *De superbia*, 13.25–27.

123 See e.g. Bobonich & Destrée 2007; Rorty 1980b, and in contemporary philosophy Davidson 1970; Rorty 1980a, 1983, 1997, 1998.

124 Plato *Protagoras*, 352b–c; Xenophon *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4–5.

125 Destrée 2007, 140.

126 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 7.3.11, 1147b.

127 Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea*, 2.9, 1109b.

128 Rorty 1997, 649, 651–653.

129 On the socio-cultural origins of desires, see *ibid*.

130 Edwards 1993, 175, 186.

131 Cf. Nussbaum 1996.

132 See e.g. Payne 2010 [2006], 48–55; White & Epston 1990, 63–75.

133 Gill 2006c.

134 Long 1991.

135 Edwards 1993, 3.

136 Brown 2007.

137 Foucault 1991 [1975], 135–169.

138 Brown 2007, 105, 110, 112–113.

139 Brown 2007, 111, 127.

140 See e.g. White 2007, 35.

141 Gowers 1993, 24.

142 Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 6.22.4.

143 Plutarch *Cato Maior*, 9.5 [= *Vitae Parallelae*, 341].

144 Gowers 1993, 13.

145 Pliny *Naturalis historia*, 33.43.149–150; Gowers 1993, 13; Garnsey 1999, 78.

146 Gowers 1993, 14.

147 Long 1991, 114.

148 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 1.28.1; 1.28.5.

149 Long 1991, 115.

150 Epictetus *Dissertationes*, 2.18.24–26.

151 Epictetus *Encheiridion*, 34.

152 White & Epston 1990, 63.

153 Seneca the Younger *De consolatione ad Helviam*, 10.3; Suetonius *Vitellius*, 7.3.13.1.

154 Seneca the Younger *De consolatione ad Helviam*, 10.4–5.

155 Seneca the Younger *De consolatione ad Helviam*, 10.9–10.

156 Suetonius *Vitellius*, 7.3.18.1–19.

157 White & Epston 1990, 55–56, 60, 63.

158 Gowers 1993, 12–14.

159 Craig 2007, 336.

Notes to Chapter 11

11.1

1 The ancient sources show that envy (Latin *invidia*, Greek *phthonos*) was deeply dreaded, indeed feared. Envy could be the cause of ill-will and gossip, but it was also thought to be embodied in the form of the Evil Eye: a physical force that could cause disease and destruction (Dunbabin & Dickie 1983, 9–10).

2 On envy of the gods, see McCartney 1981 [1943], 10; Elliott 2016, 96–99.

3 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 56.3.3–4.

11.2

4 Johnston 1999, 194–195.

5 The concept of "sticky objects" was introduced by Sara Ahmed (2004), and is discussed in some detail in Chapter 6.

11.5

6 The concepts of "Taleworld" and "Storyrealm" were introduced by

Katharine Galloway Young in order to analytically separate the world of the narrative (the Taleworld), which is essentially a world unto itself, from the real-life context in which the story is being told. The act of telling a story, which constitutes the Storyrealm and is a special type of context with its own specific rules, is in turn distinguished from the "Realm of Conversation" in which we conduct our everyday talk (see Young 1987, 14–16).

7 Ricoeur 1990a [1983], 70–71; Ricoeur 1991, 96–97, 128, 135. Elsewhere Paul Ricoeur speaks of fictional narrative as "imaginative variations" on the conditions of the real world.

8 Ricoeur 1990b [1983], 179.

9 Legends, urban legends and novellas are all realistic narratives, and often share plot elements. The major distinctions between them terminologically consist in legends tilting more to including supernatural elements, while urban legends do not and are typically set in a very near past. Both can be viewed as traditional credence narratives, as they strive for believability. Novellas are traditional fictions, realistic in tone, but with less concern for establishing believability. (For an in-depth discussion, see Hansen 2017, 16–19, 28–30).

Notes to Appendix

1 Striped dolphins (*Stenella coeruleoalba*) were common in the entire northern part of the Mediterranean sea (Reeves & Notarbartolo di Sciara 2006, 57–63), and the dolphin was a common motif in art and literature of the ancient era (Stebbins 1929; Montgomery 1966; Kitchell 2014, 53–57). The notion that dolphins could befriend humans is not without merit; a dolphin named Opo in Opononi, New Zeeland had a close and warm relationship with humans (Higham 1960, 82–83).

2 There are a number of related types of legends about human-dolphin relations: "The story of Arion", the story of how the Greek poet Arion was saved through divine intervention by a dolphin; "The grateful dolphin", i.e., stories about dolphins whose lives were saved; "Dolphins seeking human companionship and friendship"; "Dolphins enamoured with beautiful boys"; and "Dolphins helping fishermen". While a number of the ancient authors refer to earlier works as a source for their stories, there is much to suggest an oral origin for many of them. This is exemplified by one type of legend, "Dolphins enamoured with beautiful boys" or "The dolphin rider", stories which display characteristic traits for oral legends (see Chapter 2.1): they vary in length, degree of detail, specific details, such as the location and time in which they were supposed to have taken place, and the name of the boy. In one case, in Pliny the Younger's *Letters*, the author states that he had *heard* the story at a dinner party (Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 9.33.1; see Chapter 2.2), i.e., one of the criteria for identifying oral traditions (see Chapter 2.4). Although some scholars have pointed to the fact that Pliny the Younger's story is closely related to stories found in his uncle's, Pliny the Elder's, *Natural History* (*Naturalis historia*, 9.8.24–28; see e.g. the discussion in Stevens 2009, 161–164), it is generally regarded as a story of oral origin by classical folklorists (e.g. Hansen 2017, 186–189).

3 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 5.6.

4 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 6.15.

5 Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 9.631a; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.8.24–28; Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 6.8; Aelian *De natura animalium*, 2.6, 5.6 & 6.15; Oppian *Halieutica*, 5.416–424; see also Montgomery 1966, 311–312; Kitchell 2014, 54–55.

6 Aelian *De natura animalium*, 5.6.

7 See for instance Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 13.606e; Kitchell 2014, 54.

8 Aristophanes *Ranae*, 1317f; Euripides *Electra*, 435–436; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.8.24; Aelian *De natura animalium*, 2.6.

9 In Athenaeus, there is a story of a man – Corianus of Miletus – saving a dolphin caught by fishermen. As an act of gratitude, Corianus was later saved by a dolphin when he was shipwrecked (Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 13.606e). In Aesop, there is a version of this story with a humorous twist: a pet monkey on a ship that suffered shipwreck is rescued

by a dolphin thinking he was a man. As the dolphin swam towards land it asked the monkey if it came from Athens, and the monkey assured the dolphin that it belonged to an illustrious family from that very city. When the dolphin asked if it knew Piraeus, the monkey – revealing its lack of intelligence – assumed that this was a person and said he was a dear friend. Infuriated, the dolphin cast off the monkey, thereby killing it (*Aesopica*, 73 (Perry)).

10 The basis of this widespread legend is an inserted narrative in Herodotus' *Histories* (*Historiae*, 1.23–24), and numerous later authors refer to this work directly or indirectly (see for example Ovid *Fasti*, 2.79–118; Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 16.19; Pausanias *Graeciae descriptio*, 3.25.7; Dio Chrysostom *Orationes*, 37.1–4. See also Hooker 1989; Jackson 1993). But while later sources rely on a written work, Herodotus makes clear that the origin of this story is oral, stressed in phrases like: "the Corinthians say", "the Lesbians agree" (Vignolo Munson 1986, 96–97; Gray 2001, 11–12). Despite a desperate situation – facing an almost certain death, moreover death without burial – Arion displays courage and fearlessness as he leaps into the sea.

11 A number of the ancient authors actually tell several, closely related, stories of dolphins being enamoured with beautiful boys, collectively referred to as "The dolphin rider" (Aristotle *Historia animalium*, 9.631a; Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.8.24–28; Pliny the Younger *Epistulae*, 9.33; Oppian *Halieutica*, 5.448–518; Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, 6.8; Aelian *De natura animalium*, 6.15; Athenaeus *Deipnosophistai*, 13.606d).

12 For a discussion of the custom of *paiderastia*, see Cantarella 2008.

13 Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.9.29–32; Oppian *Halieutica*, 5.425–447. There are documented cases from Australia (Montgomery 1966, 313) and Brazil (Kitchell 2014, 55) of dolphins cooperating with local fishermen in catching fish.

14 Dio Cassius *Historia Romana*, 62.5.5; and also the discussion in Garnsey 1999, ch. 1.

15 Besides one other passage in Pliny the Elder – a boy feeding bread to a dolphin (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia*, 9.8.25) – this is the only example of dolphins consuming human food known to us.

List of Abbreviations

AE = *L'Année épigraphique*. 1888–present. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.

ATU (Aarne–Thompson–Uther) = Uther, Hans-Jörg. 2004. *The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography: Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson* vol. 1–3. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia.

CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. 1862–present. Berlin: Reimer (up til 1925), de Gruyter (1926–present).

Daremberg-Saglio = Daremberg, Charles Victor & Saglio, Edmond. 1877–1919. *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*. Paris: Hachette Livre.

Der Neue Pauly = *Der Neue Pauly: Enzyclopädie der Antike*. 1996–2003. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.

ILS = *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. 1892–1916. Edited by Hermann Dessau. Berlin: Weidmann.

New Oxford Thesaurus of English = *The New Oxford Thesaurus of English*. 2000. Edited by Patrick Hanks. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OCD = *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, third revised edition. 2003. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxford English Dictionary = *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 2000–present. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxford Latin Dictionary = *The Oxford Latin Dictionary*, second edition. 2012 [Originally published 1968–1982]. Edited by P.G.W. Glare. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

RE = *Paulys Real-encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. 1893–1980. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.

Stith Thompson *Motif-Index* = Thompson, Stith. 1955–1960. *Motif-index of Folk-Literature: a Classification of Narrative Elements in Folktales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Mediaeval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-books and Local Legends* vol. 1–6. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger.

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This book deals with folk narratives expressing some of the basic fears of ancient Roman culture. These included, on the one hand, threats to the survival of the family, especially concerning children, pregnant women and to some extent also young men, and, on the other hand, the hidden dangers of the urban environment, especially places such as sewers, cemetaries, crossroads, inns and harbours.

Human existence was precarious in many ways in antiquity: success could swiftly turn into misfortune, health into illness and death, with disastrous consequences for the most important social network in this era, the family. These misfortunes could be difficult to cope with, and adversity, calamity and death had to be made intelligible emotionally. By verbalising fear – in the form of stories of demons, witches, ghosts and wild animals – it could be endowed with a concrete shape.

The argument of this book proceeds from the assumption that the act of narrating stories helps us to make sense of our lives and the world we live in. In narrative, we articulate our emotions, thoughts and opinions, voice our hopes and desires, our anxieties and fears. The therapeutic power of stories lies in their ability to provide a space for reflection on the difficulties and anxieties in life.

The concept of *emotional topography* is introduced as an analytical tool in studying the relation between space, emotions and time. Certain places were associated with one range of emotions during the day and another at night, such as a cemetary, which at night evoked dread and disgust. Other places, such as for example inns, could evoke a sense of unease regardless of the time of day; they were places where horrendous things might take place, where you risked encountering everything from murderous inn-keepers to werewolves.

Front cover: Octopus, detail from a Roman mosaic in the 'House of the Dancing Faun', Pompeii. Photo Marie-Lan Nguyen (2011). Public Domain. Image editing Petja Kauppi.

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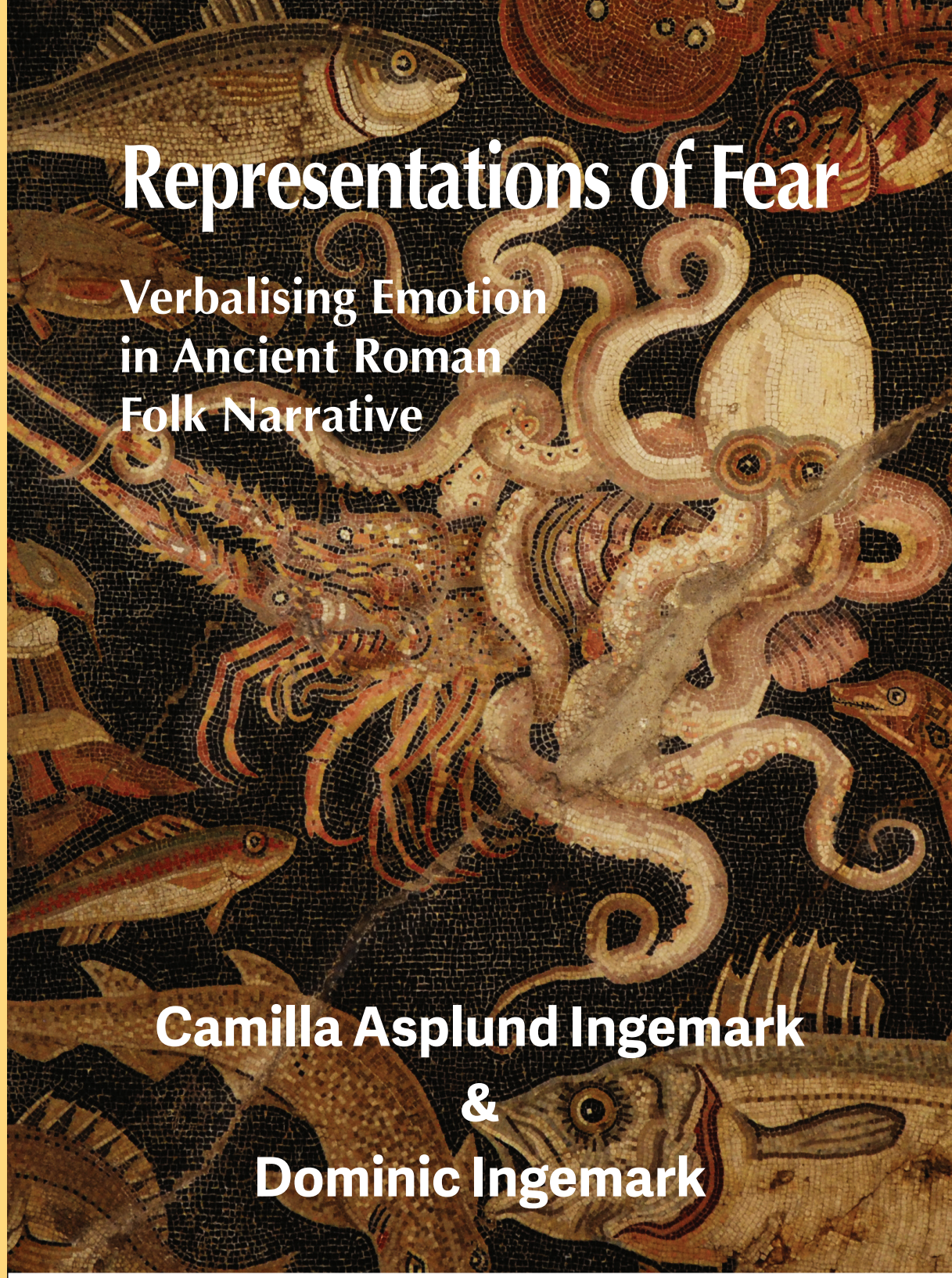
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&
Dominic Ingemark

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